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IN SYMPATHY.

BY M. R.

The sluggish stream moves listlessly,
And o'er it sob the withered grasses;
No more across the lawn or lea
In golden gleams the sunlight passes:
The birds sing not in vale or wold,
In leafless boughs the winds are sighing,
And fallen leaves of red and gold
And bronze in sodden heaps are lying.

The sunbeams o'er the new grass rushed,
The happy-hearted birds were singing,
The wild-rose and the hedges blushed,
The foxglove's bells were gaily ringing.
And through the scented meadow-land
The brook sang silv'ry pebbles over,
When by its margin, hand in hand,
We loitered, I and my false lover.

But now the light is pale and gray,
Gray are the mountains tall and hoary;
The wood vale, with the glen and brae
And shorn of all their Summer glory;
Gray are the skies, gray is the sea [dashes;
That 'gainst the bared rocks moans and
All Nature mourns to-day with me
Above Love's gray and lifeless ashes!

FOUND AND LOST.

BY C. J.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

OTTO STAARBRUCKER was the first witness called. He gave his evidence with great clearness, and conveyed, with consummate skill, the impression of his extreme reluctance and pain at having thus brought his former friend into trouble.

Only the natural instinct of self-protection, on behalf of himself and his sister, and the absolute refusal of the prisoner to "declare" the diamond, had induced him to take the extreme step of informing the authorities.

One item, and that an important one, was added to the evidence tendered by him upon the occasion of the prisoner's committal. He had omitted then to state that on two evenings, shortly before his discovery of the diamond in Farnborough's possession, he had seen the prisoner, not far from the house, in earnest conversation with a native.

The time was evening, and it was dark, and he was unable to positively identify the boy. This evidence, as was suggested by counsel for the prosecution, tended manifestly to couple the prisoner with a native diamond theft, and thereby to lighten the damning chain of evidence now being wound about him.

Staarbrucker suffered it to be extracted from him with an art altogether admirable. He had not mentioned the fact at the former hearing, thinking it of trifling importance. The prosecuting advocate, on the contrary, exhibited it with manifest care and parade, as a most important link in the case.

This piece of evidence, it may be at once stated, a piece of pure and infamous invention on Otto's part, was an afterthought suggested by seeing Frank once give an order to a native groom. In the hands of himself and a clever advocate it did its work.

In cross-examination, Otto Staarbrucker suffered very little at the hands of the defending advocate, skilful though the latter proved himself. The prisoner's history (and indeed, perfectly true story) of Staarbrucker's, repeated offers of a prospecting partnership, and of his intimate rage and vexation upon Frank's refusal, he treated with an amused, slightly contemptuous surprise.

The man was a finished actor, and resisted all the assaults of counsel upon him and other points of the story with supreme skill and coolness. The touch of sympathy for the prisoner, too, was never lost sight of.

Frank Farnborough, as he glared fiercely at this facile villain, reeling off lie after lie with damning effrontery, felt powerless. What could he do or say against such a man? To express the burning indignation he felt, would be but to injure his case the more fatally. With difficulty indeed, while he felt his fingers tingling to be at the slanderer's throat, he restrained himself, as Otto's calm eye occasionally wandered to him expressing, as plainly as might be for the benefit of all present, his sympathy and sorrow at the unfortunate situation of his former friend.

The next witness called was Miss Nina Staarbrucker. Again there was a manifest sensation. Miss Staarbrucker was well known in Kimberley, and every eye turned in the direction of the door. There was some delay; at length a passage was made through the crowded court, and Nina appeared.

Before she steps into the witness box it may be well to explain Nina's attitude and feelings from the morning of the day upon which Frank's arrest had been made.

After cooling down somewhat from the paroxysm of rage and revenge, which had impelled him to turn traitor upon his friend, and deliver him into the none too tender hands of the detective authorities, Otto Staarbrucker had suffered a strong revulsion of feeling. He regretted, chiefly for his own ease and comfort, the rash step he had taken, and would have given a good deal to retrace it. But the die was irrevocably cast; having chosen his path, he must perforce follow it.

He was well aware of Nina's friendship—fondness he might call it—for Frank; her sympathy would most certainly be enlisted actively on the young man's behalf immediately upon hearing of his position.

At all hazards she must be kept quiet. Shortly before tiffin, he returned to the house. Calling Nina into the sitting-room, he shut the door and sat down.

"Nina,' he said, 'I have some bad news for you. Don't excite yourself, or make a noise, but listen carefully and quietly to what I tell you, and then we'll put our heads together and see what is best to be done."

Nina turned pale. She feared some news of disaster to Otto's business, which latterly, as she knew, had been none too flourishing. Otto went on.

"I heard, late last night, from an unexpected quarter, that the detective people had an inkling of an unregistered diamond in this house. You know very well what that means. I went to Frank Farnborough both late last night and early this morning. I begged and entreated him, for his own sake, for all our sakes, to go at once first thing this morning and hand over and declare the stone.

"This he refused to do, and in a very insulting way. I had no other course open for my own safety and yours, but to give the information myself. I am afraid matters have been complicated by the discovery that the diamond is a De Beer's stone, undoubtedly stolen. Frank is in a temporary mess, but we shall be able to get him out of the difficulty somehow."

Nina had uttered a low cry of pain at the beginning of this speech. She knew too well the danger, and as Otto went on, her heart seemed almost to stand still within her.

"Oh," she gasped, "what is to be done? What shall we do? I must see Frank at once. Surely an explanation from us both should be sufficient to clear him?" She rose as she spoke.

"My dear Nina; first of all we must do nothing rash. We shall no doubt be easily able to get Frank out of this trouble. The thing is, of course, absurd. He has been a little rash—as indeed we all have—that is all. For the present you must leave everything to me. I don't want to have your name dragged into the matter even for a day. If there is any serious trouble, you shall be consulted. Trust to me, and we shall make matters all right."

By one pretext or another, Otto managed to keep his sister quiet, and to allay her worst fears, until two days after, by which time Frank had been sent for trial and was safely in prison. Nina had meanwhile fruitlessly endeavored to possess her soul in patience. When Otto had come in that evening he told her of the news.

"Why was I not called in evidence?" she asked, fiercely. "Surely I could have done something for Frank. You seem to me to take this matter—a matter of life and death—with very extraordinary coolness. I cannot imagine why you have not done more. You know Frank is as innocent as we are ourselves. We ought to have moved heaven and earth to save him this dreadful degradation. What—what can he think of me? I shall go to-morrow and see his solicitors and tell them the whole of the facts!"

Next morning Nina read an account of the proceedings in the newspaper. It was plainly apparent, from the report of Otto's evidence, that there was something very wrong going on. She taxed her brother with it.

"My dear Nina, be reasonable," he said. "Of course Frank has got into a desperate mess. I was not going to give myself away, because I happened to know, innocently, that he had an unregistered diamond for two or three days in his possession. I have since found out that Frank knew a good deal more of the origin of that diamond than I gave him credit for, and it was my plain duty to protect myself."

This was an absolute fabrication, and Nina more than half suspected it.

"But you were trying to make arrangements with Frank to prospect the very place the stone came from," said the girl.

"I admit that, fully," replied Otto, calmly. "But I never then suspected that the diamond was stolen. I imagined it was innocently come by. It was foolish, I admit, and I am not quite such an idiot, after giving the information I did, to own now that I was prepared to go in for a speculation with Frank upon the idea of the diamond being an up-country one. Now, clearly understand me, not a word must be said upon this point, or you may involve me in just such a mess as Frank is in."

Nina was fairly bewildered, and held her peace. Matters had taken such astounding turns. The diamond, it seemed after all, was a stolen one, and a De Beer's stone to boot; she knew not what to think, or where to turn for guidance and information. And yet, something must be done to help Frank.

For the next few days the girl moved about the house like a ghost, seldom speaking to her brother, except to give the barest replies to his scant remarks.

Several times she was in a mind to go straight to Frank's solicitor and tell her version of the whole affair. But then, again, there were many objections to such a course. She would be received with great suspicion, as an informer from an enemy's camp.

After almost insufferable doubts and heartaches, Nina judged it best to wait until the day of trial, and then and there to give her version of the affair as she knew it. Surely the judge would give are to a truthful and unprejudiced witness, anxious only to save an honest and cruelly misused man! Surely, surely Frank could or would be saved!

About a week before the trial, she was subpœnaed as a witness on behalf of both prosecution and defence, and finally, the day before the terrible day, Otto had a long interview with her upon the subject of her evidence.

Her proof he himself had carefully prepared and corrected with the prosecuting solicitor; excusing his sister upon the ground of ill-health and nervousness, but guaranteeing her evidence at the trial.

He now impressed upon her, with great solemnity and anxiety, the absolute necessity of her story coinciding precisely with his own. Nina listened in a stony silence, and said almost nothing. Otto was not satisfied, and expressed himself so.

"Nina," he said, sharply, "let us clearly understand each other. My tale is simple enough, and, after what has occurred—the finding of a stolen diamond, and not an innocent stone from up-country—I cannot conceal from myself that Frank must be guilty.

"You must see this yourself. Don't get me into a mess, by any dangerous sympathies, or affections, or feelings of that sort. Be the sensible, good sister you always have been, and whatever you do, be careful; guard your tongue and brain in court, with the greatest watchfulness. Remember, my reputation—your brother's reputation—is at stake, as well as Frank's?"

Nina dared not trust herself to say much. Her soul sickened within her; but, for Frank's sake, she must be careful. Her course on the morrow was fully made up. She replied to Otto: "I shall tell my story as simply as possible. In spite of what you say, I know, and you must know, that Frank is perfectly innocent. I know little about the matter, except seeing Frank with the diamond in his hand that night. You may be quite content. I shall not injure you in any way."

Otto Staarbrucker was by no means satisfied with his sister's answer, but it was the best he could get out of her. He could not prevent—it was too late now—her being called as a witness. Come what might, she was his sister, and never would, never could, put him, her brother, into danger.

At last the time had come. Nina made her way, with much difficulty, to the witness-box; steadily took the stand and was sworn. All Kimberley, as she knew, was looking intently and watching her every gesture.

She had changed greatly in the last few weeks, and now looked, for her, thin and worn—almost ill. The usual warmth of her dark beauty was lacking. Only an ivory pallor was in her face; but her glorious eyes were firm, open and determined, and honesty and truth, men well might see, were in her glance.

She looked once quickly at the two judges and the magistrate sitting with them. It did Frank good, and he breathed more freely. Nina, at all events, was the Nina of old.

The prosecuting advocate opened the girl's evidence quietly, with the usual preliminaries. Then very gently he asked Nina if she was well acquainted with the prisoner. Her reply was, "Yes, very well acquainted."

"I suppose," continued counsel, "I may even call him a friend of yours?"

"Yes," replied Nina, "a very great friend."

"Without penetrating unduly into your private affairs and sympathies, Miss Staarbrucker," went on the advocate, "I will ask you to tell the court

shortly what you actually saw on the night in question—the night I mean, when the diamond was first seen by yourself and your brother."

Here was Nina's opportunity, and she took advantage of it. She told plainly, yet graphically, the story of that evening: she portrayed the amazed delight of Frank on the discovery of the stone, his free avowal of his find; the knife in his hand; the open crocodile on the table; the pebbles previously taken from the reptile's stomach.

She went on with her story with only such pauses as the taking of the judge's notes required. Counsel, once or twice, attempted to pull her up; she was going much too fast and too far to please him; but the court allowed her to complete her narrative. She dealt with the next two days.

Mr. Farnborough had kept the diamond, it was true. He was puzzled to know what to do with it. He had, finally, announced his intention of giving it up and declaring it, and he would undoubtedly have done so, but for his arrest.

The stone might have been stolen, or it might not, but Farnborough, as all his friends knew, was absolutely incapable of stealing diamonds, or of buying diamonds, knowing them to be stolen.

The stone came into his possession in a perfectly innocent manner, as she could and did testify on oath. As for her brother's suspicions, she could not answer for or understand them. For two days, he at all events had had none; she could not account for his sudden change. Spite of the judge's cautions, she concluded a breathless little harangue—for she had let herself go completely now—by expressing her emphatic belief in Frank's absolute innocence.

She had finished, and in her now deathly pale beauty was leaving the box. There were no further questions asked by counsel upon either side.

Nina had said far too much for the one, and the advocate for the defence judged it wiser to leave such a runaway severely alone. Who knew in what direction she might turn next?

He whispered regretfully to his solicitor: "If we had got hold of that girl, by George! we might have done some good with her—with a martingale and double bit on."

The senior judge, as Nina concluded, remarked blandly—for he had an eye for beauty—"I am afraid we have allowed you a good deal too much latitude, Miss Staarbrucker, and a great deal of what you have told the court is quite inadmissible as evidence."

As for Otto, he had stared with open mouth and fixed glare at his sister during her brief episode. He now heaved a deep breath of relief, as he watched the judges.

"Good," he said to himself savagely under his breath, "she has overdone it, and spoilt her own game—the little fool!"

Nina moved to her seat and sat down faint and dejected, watching with feverish eyes for the end.

The case for the prosecution was soon finished. Three witnesses, experts of well-known reputation and unimpeachable character, testified to the fact that the stone was a De Beer's stone, and by no possibility any other. Evidence was then put in proving conclusively that the diamond was unregistered.

Counsel for the defence had but a poor case, but he made the best of it. He dwelt upon the unimpeachable reputation of the prisoner, of the utter improbability of his having stolen the diamond, or bought it knowing it to be stolen.

There was not a particle of direct evidence upon these points. The evidence of experts was never satisfactory. Their evidence in this case was mere matter of opinion.

It was well known that the history of gold and gem finding exceeded in romance the wildest inspirations of novelists. The finding of the first diamond in South Africa was a case very much in point.

Why should not the diamond have come from the Mahalapsi River with the other gravel in the belly of the dead crocodile? Mr. Farnborough's friend, Mr. Kentburn, would prove beyond doubt that he had brought the mummified crocodile from the Mahalapsi River, where he had picked it up.

The greatest offence that could by any possibility be brought home to his client was that he had this stone in his possession for two days without declaring it! That was an act of sheer inadvertence.

The stone was not a local stone, and it was a puzzling matter, with a young and inexperienced man, to know quite what to do with it. If the stone were, as he, counsel, contended, not a stone from the Cape districts at all, it was an arguable question whether the court had any right or jurisdiction in the case.

Would it be contended that a person coming to South Africa, innocently, with a Brazilian or an Indian diamond in his possession, could be hauled off to prison and thereafter sentenced for unlawful possession?

Such a contention would be monstrous! The great diamond industry had in South Africa far too much power already—many men thought. Let them be careful in further stretching or adding to those powers—powers that reminded unbiassed people more of the worst days of the Star Chamber or the Inquisition, than of a modern community.

Had the prisoner tried to conceal the diamond? On the contrary, he had shown it eagerly to Mr. Staarbrucker and his sister immediately he had found it. That was not the act of a guilty man!

These, and many other arguments, were employed by the defending advocate in a powerful and almost convincing speech. There were weak points, undoubtedly—fatally weak, many of the spectators thought them. These were avoided, or lightly skated over with consummate art.

The advocate closed his speech by a touching appeal that a young, upright, and promising career might not be wrecked upon the vaguest of circumstantial evidence.

The speech was over; all the witnesses had been called; the speeches concluded. The afternoon was wearing on apace, and the court was accordingly adjourned; the prisoner was put back into jail again, and the crowded assemblage flocked into the outer air, to discuss hotly throughout the rest of the evening the many points of this singular and absorbing case.

* * * * * *

Again, as usual in Kimberley at this season, the next morning broke clear and invigorating. All the world of the corrugated-iron city seemed, after breakfast, brisk, keen, and full of life as they went about their business.

The Cape swallows flitted and hawked, and played hither and thither in the bright atmosphere, or sat, looking sharply about them, upon the telegraph wires or housetops, preening their feathers and displaying their handsome chestnut body coloring. The great market square was still full of wagons, and long spans of oxen, and of native people, drawn from well nigh every quarter of South Africa.

Out there in the sunlit market-place stood a man, whose strong brain was just now busily engaged in piecing together and puzzling out the patchwork of this extraordinary case.

David Ayling, with his mighty voice, oak-like frame, keen gray eyes, and vast iron-gray beard, was a periodical and excellently well-known Kimberley visitant. For years he had traded and hunted in the far interior.

His reputation for courage, resource, and fair dealing was familiar to all men, and David's name had for years been a household word from the Cape to the Zambesi. Periodically, the trader came down to Kimberley with his wagons and outfit, after a year or two spent in the distant interior.

Yesterday morning he had come in, and in the afternoon and evening he seemed to hear upon men's tongues nothing else than Frank Farnborough's case, and the story of the Mahalapsi diamond.

Now David had known Frank for some few years, and had taken a liking to him. Several times he had brought down-country small collections of skins, and trophies of the chase, got together at the young man's suggestion. He had in his wagon, even now, some new and rare birds from the far-off Zambesi lands, and the two had had many a deal together.

Frank's unhappy plight at once took hold of the trader's sympathies, and the Mahalapsi and crocodile episodes tended yet further to excite his interest. Certain suspicions had been growing in his mind. This morning, before breakfast, he had carefully read and re-read the newspaper report of the trial, and now, just before the court opened, he was waiting impatiently with further developments busily evolving in his brain.

There was a bigger crowd even than yesterday; the prisoner and counsel had come in; all waited anxiously for the end of the drama. In a few minutes the court entered, grave and self-possessed, and the leading judge began to arrange his notes.

At that moment, David Ayling, who had shouldered his way to the fore, stood up and addressed the court in his tremendous deep chested tones, which penetrated easily to every corner of the chamber.

"My lords," he said, "before you proceed further, I should like to lay one or two facts before you—not yet known in this case. They are very important, and I think you should hear them in order that justice may be done, and perhaps an innocent man saved. I have only just come from the Zambesi and never heard of this trial till late yesterday afternoon."

Two persons, as they listened to these words and looked at the strong, determined man uttering them, felt, they knew not why, instantly braced and strengthened, as if by a mighty tonic.

They were Frank, the prisoner, hitherto despairing and out of heart, and Nina Staarbrucker, sitting at the back of the court, pale and trembling with miserable anticipations.

"You know me, my lord, I think," went on David in his deep voice.

"Yes, Mr. Ayling, we know you, of course," answered the senior judge (everyone in Kimberley knew David Ayling), "and I am, with my colleagues, anxious to get all the evidence available before completing the case. This is somewhat irregular, but upon the whole, I think you had better be sworn and state what you have to say."

David went to the witness box and was sworn. "This crocodile skin here," he went on, pointing to the skin, which was handed up to him, "I happen to know very well. I have examined it carefully before your lordship came in; it is small and of rather peculiar shape, especially about the head. I remember that skin well, and can swear to it; there are not many like it knocking about. That skin was put on to my wagon in Kimberley seventeen months ago, and was carried by me to the Mahalapsi River."

The court had become intensely interested as the trader spoke, the judges and magistrate pricked up their ears and looked intently, first at the skin, then at David.

"Go on," said the judge.

"Well, my lord," resumed David, "the skin was put on to my wagon in February of last year, by Sam Vesthreim, a Jew storekeeper, in a small way in Beaconsfield. There were some other odds and ends put on the wagon, little lots of goods, which I delivered.

"But the crocodile skin, Sam Vesthreim said, was a bit of curio, and he particularly wanted it left at some friend's place further up-country. I was in a hurry at the time, and forgot to take the name, but Sam said there was a label on the skin.

"The thing was pitched in with a lot of other stuff, and lay there for a long time. I lost sight of it till we had got to the Mahalapsi River, where the wagon was overturned in crossing. I off-loaded, and the crocodile skin then turned up with the label off. We were heavily laden; the skin was, I thought, useless; we were going on to the Zambesi, and I had clean forgotten where the skin ought to have been left.

"It seemed a useless bit of gear, so I pitched it in the bushes, in the very spot as near as I can make it, where Mr. Farnborough's friend, Mr. Kentburn, found it, nearly a year later, as he came down country. That is one remarkable thing. I would like to add, my lord, that the Mahalapsi is a dry river, never running except in rains; and in all my experience, and I have passed it some scores of times, I never knew a crocodile up in that neighborhood. The chances of there being any other crocodile skin in that sandy place and among those bushes, where Mr. Kentburn found this one, would, I reckon, be something like a million to one.

"There is one other point, my lords. Long after Sam Vesthreim delivered that skin on my wagon, I read in the newspapers that he had been arrested for I. D. B.—only a few weeks after I saw him—and sentenced to a term of imprisonment.

"I have puzzled mightily over this case, and I must say, the more I think of it, the more unaccountable seems to me the fact of Sam Vesthreim sending that dried crocodile skin up-country. If it had been down-country or to England, I could understand it; but in this case it seems very much like sending coals to Newcastle. I never knew that Sam was in the I. D. B. trade till I saw his imprisonment in the paper. I think he had some peculiar object in getting that skin out of his house. And I cannot help thinking, my lord, that Sam Vesthreim, if he could be found, could throw a good deal of light on this crocodile and diamond business. In fact I'm sure of it. It's quite on the cards, to my thinking, that he put the diamond in that crocodile himself."

Some questions were put to the witness by counsel for both sides, without adding to or detracting from the narrative in any way. The court seemed a great deal impressed by David's story, as indeed did the whole of the crowded audience, who had breathlessly listened to its recital.

Mr. Fiecknoe, the detective, was called forward. He informed the court that Sam Vesthreim was now at Capetown undergoing a long term of imprisonment. He was no doubt at work on the Breakwater.

The senior judge was a man of decision, and he had quickly made up his mind. After a short whispered consultation with his colleagues, he spoke.

"The turn this case has taken is so singular, and the evidence given by Mr. Ayling has imparted so new an aspect, that in the prisoner's interest we are determined to have the matter sifted to the bottom. I will adjourn the court for a week, in order to secure the convict Vesthreim's attendance here upon oath. Will this day week suit the convenience of all counsel in this case?"

Counsel intimated that the day of adjournment met their views, and once more the crowded court emptied. As David Ayling turned to leave, he caught Frank Farnborough's eye. He gave him a bright reassuring nod, and a wink which did him a world of good.

Altogether Frank went back to another weary week's confinement in far better spirits than he had been for many days. There was, at all events, some slight element of hope and explanation now. And it was refreshing to him as a draught of wine, to find such a friend as David Ayling fighting his battle so stoutly, so unexpectedly.

Nina Staarbrucker stole silently out of the court, only anxious to get home, and escape observation. There were many eyes upon her, but she heeded them not at all.

There seemed some ray of light for Frank; for herself, whether Frank came out triumphantly or no, there was no outlook, all seemed blackness and gloom. Otto's part in this wretched business had made ruin of all her hopes. Her brother's treachery had determined her upon seeking a career of her own—work of some sort—anywhere away from Kimberley she must get, and get at once, so soon as the trial was over, and whatever its result.

Once more, in a week's time, the court wore its former aspect, the characters were all marshalled for the final act. The new addition to the cast, Mr. Samuel Vesthreim, a lively, little, dark-visaged Jew of low type, seemed on the best of terms with himself.

For more than fifteen months he had been hard at it on Capetown Breakwater, or road-scarping upon the breezy heights round the Cape peninsula—always, of course, under the escort of guards and the unpleasing supervision of loaded rifles—and really he needed a little rest and change.

This trip to Kimberley was the very thing for him. What slight sense of shame he had ever had, had long since vanished under his recent hardening experiences; and as the little man looked round the crowded court, he saw the well-remembered faces of many a Kimberley acquaintance, and it did his heart good. He positively beamed again—in a properly subdued manner, of course.

The leading judge remarked to the advocates, "Perhaps it will save the time of all if I put some questions to this witness myself."

The suggestion was gracefully received, and the judge turned to the little Jew, now attentive in the witness-box.

"Samuel, or Sam Vesthreim, you are a convict now undergoing a term of penal servitude at Capetown, I think?"

"Yeth, my lord,"

"It may, perhaps, tend slightly to lessen or mitigate the extreme term of your imprisonment if I receive perfectly truthful and straight-forward answers to the questions I am going to ask. Be very careful, therefore. Any future recommendation on my part to the authorities will depend upon yourself."

"Yeth, my lord," answered Sam, in his most serious manner—and he meant it.

"About seventeen months ago you were in business in Beaconsfield, were you not?"

"Yeth, my lord."

"Do you know Mr. Ayling here?" pointing to the trader.

"I do, my lord."

"Do you remember entrusting Mr. Ayling with some goods about that time to take up-country?"

"I do, my lord."

"What were they?"

"There were three cases of groceries to be delivered in Barkly West, and a crocodile skin to be left at the place of a friend of mine in the Transvaal."

"Take that skin in your hands." The crocodile was handed up like a baby. "Do you recognise it?"

"Yeth, my lord, that is the identical skin, I believe, that I handed to Mr. Ayling."

"Now be careful. Was there anything inside that crocodile skin?"

The little Jew saw now exactly which way the cat jumped, and he saw, too, that only the truth could be of use to him in the weary days and years yet to come on Capetown Breakwater. The court was hushed by this time to an absolute silence. You could have almost heard a feather fall.

"Well, my lord," the little Jew replied, "there wath something inside that crocodile. I had had a little bit of a speculation, and there was a big diamond inside the crocodile skin. I put it there myself. You see, my lord," he went on rapidly, "I had been doing one or two little transactions in stones, and I fancied there was something in the air, and so I put away that diamond and packed it off in the crocodile skin, safe, as I thought, to a friend in the Transvaal.

"It was a risk, but just at that time it was the only way out of the difficulty. I meant to have had an eye on the skin again, myself, a few days after, but I had a little difficulty with the police and I was prevented.

As Sam Vesthreim finished, Frank could have almost hugged him for the news he brought. An irrepressible murmur of relief ran around the crowded court, a murmur that the usher was, for a minute or two, powerless to prevent. The judge whispered to an attendant. The diamond was produced and handed to the Jew.

"Do you recognise that stone?" asked the judge.

"I do, my lord," answered Vesthreim, emphatically. "That is the stone I put inside the crocodile. I could swear to it among a thousand." The little man's eyes gleamed pleasurably, yet regretfully, upon the stone as he spoke.

Here, then, was the mystery of the fatal, puzzling diamond cleared up. There were few more questions to ask. The little Jew frankly admitted that the stone was a De Beer's stone, stolen by a native worker; there was little else to learn.

Frank was a free man, practically, as he stood there, jaded and worn, yet at least triumphant. It was a dear triumph though, only snatched from disaster by the merest chance in the world—the coming of David Ayling.

And the tortures, the agonies he had suffered in these last few weeks of suspense! He knew that nothing—the kindly congratulations of friends, the tenderer affection of relations, the hearty welcome of a well-nigh lost world—none of these good things could ever quite repay him, ever restore to him what he had lost.

In a very few minutes Frank had been discharged from custody. The judges in brief, sympathetic speeches, congratulated him on his triumphant issue from a very terrible ordeal, and trusted that the applause and increased respect of his fellow-citizens would in some slight degree make up to him for his undoubted sufferings.

Frank left the court, arm in arm with David Ayling, whom he could not sufficiently thank for his timely and strenuous assistance. A troop of friends escorted him to the Transvaal Hotel, where his health was drunk in the hearty Kimberley way with innumerable congratulations.

All this was very gratifying, as was the magnificent dinner which a number of friends gave to him a day or two later, at which half Kimberley assisted. But, for the present, Frank desired only to be left severely alone, with the quieter greetings of his few most intimate friends. He was still half stunned and very unwell; some weeks or months must elapse before he should be himself again.

One of his first inquiries was after Nina Staarbrucker, whom he wished sincerely to thank for her brave and honest defence of him at the trial. He learned, with a good deal of surprise, that she had left Kimberley on the morning after the trial, alone.

He learned too, with less surprise, that Otto had quitted the town on urgent business in the Transvaal, and was not likely to return for same time. Beyond these bare facts, he could gather little or nothing of Nina and her whereabouts. He rather suspected she had gone to some relations near Capetown, but for the present her address was undiscoverable.

Very shortly after the result of the trial, Frank Farnborough was granted by his company six months' leave of absence, with full pay in the meantime. It was felt that the young man had been injured cruelly by his imprisonment, and that some atonement was due to him; and the Great Diamond Company he served, not to be behind in the generous shake of the hand, which all Kimberley was now anxious to extend to a hardly used man, was not slow in giving practical manifestation of a public sympathy.

The stolen stone had been proved a De Beer's diamond, and Frank, its unfortunate temporary owner, had not only been deprived of a valuable find, but for his innocent ownership had suffered terribly in a way which no honest man could ever possibly forget.

In addition, therefore, to his grant of leave of absence and full salary, Frank was handed a check for two thousand dollars, being, roughly, a half share of the value of the recovered gem.

Frank at once set out upon an expedition on which he had long fixed his mind—a hunting trip to the far interior. His preparations were soon made, and, a few weeks later, he was enjoying his fill of sport and adventure in the wild country north-east of the Transvaal, at that time a veldt swarming with great game.

After three months came the rains, and with the rains, fever—fever, too, of a very dangerous type. Frank turned his wagon for the Limpopo River, and, still battling with the pestilence, kept up his shooting so long as he had strength.

At last came a time when his drugs were conquered, the fever held him in a death-like grip, and he lay in his kartel gaunt, emaciated, weak, almost in the last stage of the disease. The fever had beaten him, and he turned his face southward and trekked for civilization.

The wagons—he had a friendly trader with him by this time—had crossed the Limpopo and outspanned one hot evening in a tiny Boer village, the most remote of the rude frontier settlements of the Transvaal Republic.

Frank, now in a state of collapse, was lifted from his wagon and carried into the little back room of the only store in the place—a rude wattle and daub shanty thatched with grass. He was delirious, and lay in high fever all night. In the morning he seemed a trifle better, but not sensible of those about him. At twelve o'clock he was once more fast in the clutches of raging fever; his temperature ran up alarmingly; he rambled wildly in his talk; at this rate it seemed that life could not long support itself in so enfeebled a frame.

Towards sundown the fever had left him again; he lay in a state of absolute exhaustion, and presently fell into a gentle sleep. The trader, who had tended him day and night for a week, now absolutely wearied out, sought his wagon and went to sleep.

The storekeeper had retired, only a young woman, passing through the place, a governess on her way to some Dutchman's farm, watched by the sick man's bed.

It was about an hour after midnight, the African dawn had not yet come, but the candle shed a fainter light; a cock crew, the air seemed to become suddenly more chill. The woman rose from her chair, fetched a light cloak from the store and spread it gently over the sick man's bed. Then she lifted his head—it was a heavy task—and administered some brandy and beef-tea. Again the young man slept, or lay in torpor.

Presently the girl took his hand in her right, then sitting close to his bedside she, with her left, gently stroked his brow and hair. A sob escaped her. She kissed the listless, wasted hand; then with a little cry she half rose, bent herself softly and kissed tenderly, several times, the brow and the hollow, wasted cheek of the fever-stricken man. As she did so, tears escaped from her eyes and fell gently, all unheeded, upon Frank's face and pillow.

"Oh, my love, my love!" cried the girl, in a sobbing whisper, "to think that never again can I speak to you, take your hand, in mine! To think that I, who would have died for you, am now ashamed as I touch you—ashamed for the vile wrong that was done to you in those miserable days. My love, my darling, I must now kiss you like a thief. Our ways are apart, and the journey is so long."

Once more, leaning over the still figure, she kissed Frank's brow, and then, relapsing into her chair, cried silently for a while—a spasmodic sob now and again evincing the bitter struggle within her.

The cold gray of morning came, and still she sat by the bedside, watching intently, unweariedly, each change of the sick man's position, every flicker of the tired eyes.

During the long hours of the two next days, Frank lay for the most part in a torpor of weakness. The fever had left him; it was now a struggle between death and the balance of strength left to a vigorous constitution after such a bout. Save for an hour or so at a time, Nina had never left his side.

Here was the gentle hand that cooled the pillows, shifted the cotton Kaffir blankets that formed the bedding, gave the required nourishment, and administered the medicine.

On the evening of the fourth day there were faint symptoms of recovery; the weakened man seemed visibly stronger. Once or twice he had feebly opened his eyes and looked about him—apparently without recognition of those at hand.

It was in the middle of this night that Frank really became conscious. He had taken some nourishment, and after long lying in a state betwixt sleep and stupor, he awoke to feel a tender stroking of his hand. Presently his brow was touched lightly by soft lips.

This reminded him of his mother in years gone by. Frank was much too weak to be surprised at anything, but he opened his eyes and looked about him. It was not his mother's face that he saw, as he had dreamily half expected, but the face of one he had come to know almost as well.

Close by him stood Nina Staarbrucker, much more worn, much graver, much changed from the sweet, merry, piquant girl he had known so well at Kimberley. But the dark, friendly eyes—very loving, yet sad and beseeching, it seemed to him dimly—of the lost days, were still there or him.

Frank opened his parched lips and in a husky voice whispered, "Nina."

"Yes," said the sweet, clear voice he remembered so well, "I am here, nursing you. You must not talk. No, not a word," as he essayed to speak again, "or you will undo all the good that has been done. Rest, my darling (I can't help saying it," she said to herself; "it will do no harm, and he will never hear it again from my lips); sleep again, and you will soon be stronger."

Frank was still supremely weak, and the very presence of the girl seemed to bring peace and repose to his senses. He smiled—closed his eyes again, and slept soundly far into the next day.

That was the last he ever saw of Nina Staarbrucker. She had vanished, and although Frank, as he grew from convalescence to strength, made many inquiries as the months went by, he could never succeed in gaining satisfactory tidings of her. He once heard that she had been seen in Delagoa Bay, that was all.

Whether in the years to come they will ever meet again, time and the fates alone can say. It seems scarcely probable. Africa is vast, and nurses safely within her bosom the secret of many a lost career.

[THE END]

AN EASY STEP.—The word "budget" is from the old French "bougette," a bag, and it obtained its Parliamentary significance because the chancellors used to bring their papers relating to financial matters in a leathern bag, and introduced their plans for the year by opening the "bougette" and laying them on the table. From "bougette" to budget is an easy step to take, and in this way the name of the bag became the common term used to indicate the annual statement of national expenditure.

Bric-a-Brac.

JAPANESE DOCTORS.—In Japan doctors do not charge for their services, but, on the contrary, decline to name an amount, and protest against any idea of remuneration. The patients, on their side, are too proud to accept such services free, and send to the doctor, not as a fee, but more as a friendly gift or token of gratitude, a sum of money proportionate to the means of the giver, with some piece of silk, bronze, or lacquer work, the idea being that medical attendance is by far of too important and elevated a character to be desecrated by barter for filthy lucre.

THE BAYONET.—The bayonet is said to have derived its name from the fact that it was first made at Bayonne, France, and its origin illustrates the proverb, "Necessity is the mother of invention." A Basque regiment was hard pressed by the enemy on a mountain-ridge near there. One of the soldiers suggested that, as their ammunition was exhausted, they should fix their long knives into the barrels of their muskets. The suggestion being acted upon the first bayonet charge was made; and the victory of the Basques led to the manufacture of the weapon at Bayonne, and its adoption in the armies of Europe.

13 AS 12.—Everybody knows that thirteen is called a "baker's dozen," but how came the phrase into existence? Well, it seems that once upon a time the baker used to give for nothing to the retail dealer who sold the bread, a thirteenth loaf with every twelve loaves that were ordered. How this custom grew up it is hard to tell, except it was to help the shopkeeper to earn his living a trifle easier and to encourage him to take more bread. One explanation has it that the custom dates from the time when heavy penalties were inflicted for short weight, and that the thirteenth loaf was thrown in to make sure the weight was right; but this is perhaps doubtful, for there is a like custom in the publishing trade, in which the bookseller usually gets an extra copy without charge for every twelve books he buys from the publisher. In short, we might just as well talk of thirteen being a "publisher's dozen" as a baker's.

THE TARANTULA.—Gruesome superstitions prevail to this day in some parts of the Continent. In the neighborhood of Naples, the dangerous bite of the tarantula is not cured by medicine or surgery, but by totally alien functions. Absolute confidence is placed in the efficacy of lively motion, and the bitten person is made to dance, sometimes with the stimulus of a horsewhip, till he sinks to the ground from the sheer exhaustion. These methods are applied to patients possibly in the belief that the violent agitation of the blood caused by exercise counteracts the torpor produced by the bite of the tarantula. But this motive does not apply to another form of cure when the dancing is done by others. In some Neapolitan villages the sufferer is buried up to his neck in manure, and twenty-one female dancers are selected to surround him with their quick gyrations; seven are widows, seven wives, and seven maidens. When they drop off from lassitude, he is extricated from his position and thrown into a moderately heated oven. When he does not die from the bite or the treatment, the charm is said to have worked.

LIVING STONES.—The most curious specimens of vegetable or plant life in existence are the so-called "living stones" of the Falkland Islands. Those islands are among the most cheerless spots in the world, being constantly subjected to a strong Polar wind. If such a climate it is impossible for trees to grow erect, as they do in other countries, but Nature has made amends by furnishing a supply of wood in the most curious shape imaginable. The visitor to the Falklands sees scattered here and there singular-shaped blocks of what appear to be weather-beaten and moss-covered boulders in various sizes. Attempt to turn one of these "boulders" over, and you will meet with a surprise, because the stone is actually anchored by roots of great strength; in fact, you will find that you are fooling with one of the native trees. No other country in the world has such a peculiar "forest" growth, and it is said to be next to impossible to work the odd-shaped blocks into fuel, because it is perfectly devoid of "grain," and appears to be nothing but a twisted mass of woody fibre.

THE DEATH OF SUMMER.

BY M. E. S.

Sweet Summer lies upon her funeral bier,
Half shrouded by the red rose-leaves that fall
So softly, gently in the golden days
When Autumn's hush is stealing over all.
Her long bright locks are all unbound, and flow
Around her as she lies in dreamless rest;
A tall white lily by the dark bier's side
Shakes dewy tear-drops down upon her breast.

The nightingale has hushed her witching strain,
The swallows hasten towards the Sunny South;
The roses pine and die of longing wild
For one warm kiss from Summer's dainty mouth.
But flaunting dahlias, sunflowers all aglow,
And scentless asters, purple, white and red,
Bloom for a space, and trails of clematis
Sway o'er the bower where Summer sweet lies dead.

The nights grow long; all gold and crimson burn
The dying leaves of every forest tree;
The shadows deepen on the heath ry hills,
And moaning winds sob faintly o'er the sea.
They mourn for Summer vanished with the flowers,
The perfumed blossoms of the June-tide fair,
And, sorrowing with them through the Autumn calm,
The wood-doves' plaint sounds on the quiet air.

WON AT LAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TERRIBLE PENALTY," "HIS DEAREST SIN," "MISS FORRISTER'S LAND STEWARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVI.—(CONTINUED).

HE was shaking all over, and his brain was whirling. She—she who had told him that she loved him, had promised to be his wife—had gone, alone, to another man's rooms! The fact made him sick and giddy. He looked round vacantly.

There was a public-house at the corner of the street, and he walked across to it, asked for a whisky and soda, and lit a cigar. The barmaid, as she gave him the drink noticed his deathly pallor and the bloodshot eyes, noticed also that his hand shook as he raised the glass to his lips; and she concluded that he had been drinking.

"Looks bad, don't he?" she remarked to a fellow barmaid.

"Yes," she assented. "Hope he ain't going to stop and make a scene. I do hate a row; and he'd be an ugly customer to get rid of quietly."

Trevor, though he stayed some time, and drank and smoked, was quiet enough. The liquor brought no color to his face, though his eyes grew more bloodshot; but his hand became steadier, and as he emptied his third glass and went out he nodded mechanically to the two girls, who had been watching him covertly.

Flinging his cigar sway, he crossed the street and went up the steps of the entrance to Gaunt's flat. The rooms were on the first floor. As a rule, the porter or a page boy were in the lobby; but on this occasion they were silent, and Trevor went upstairs without seeing anyone or being seen.

At the door of Gaunt's flat he paused, and fought for calmness and self possession. Then he put out his hand to ring the electric bell; but, as he did so, he saw that the door was ajar.

In her sudden flight at Gaunt's appearance, the maid had, unwittingly, failed to close the door after her.

Trevor smiled grimly. All the better! He could steal in upon them, upon the faithless woman and the partner of her treachery, and confront them.

He pushed the door gently, and, passing through the corridor, opened the drawing-room door as gently, and entered. He looked round the room, pushed for a moment in surprise at its silence, then saw the figure lying on the couch. He closed the door noiselessly, turned the key, and stole across the room to her.

Cautious though his movements had been, she heard him, and, raising her head, she said—

"Oh! you've come back, have you? You've thought better of it——"

Then she saw who it was, and broke off with a faint cry of surprise.

"Oh! it's you?" she said, contemptuously.

He stood, and glared down at her.

"Yes, it's I!" he said. "What—what are you doing here? You didn't expect me?"

His voice was thick and harsh, his lips were strained tightly.

She regarded him with cool insolence, and dropped back, her face pillowed on her hand.

"I certainly did not!" she said. "You followed me, I suppose?"

"What are you doing here?" he repeated, as if his mind were absorbed by the question.

"Follow me, like the mean spy you are!" she said.

"What are you——?" he said again.

She interrupted him with a curt laugh.

"What business is that of yours?" she retorted.

His hand clenched at his side, and he moistened his lips.

"You can ask me that?" he said, hoarsely.

"You—you can ask me that! But I don't want any answer——"

"Then why do you ask the question?" she said.

"There is no need to tell me," he said. "You are here in his rooms—alone—at night——"

She shrugged her shoulders, and gazed up at him through half-closed lids. The man's misery and rage gave her a kind of satisfaction, pleasure. She was as heartless and cold as a statue, and the infliction of pain upon this man, whom she hated, came as a relief after all she herself had endured.

"It looks like it, doesn't it?" she said. "And it I am——"

He put his hand to his head.

"And you said that you loved me. You promised to be my wife—my wife!"

She laughed, and stretched herself into a still easier, a more indolent careless, attitude.

"Did I? It was a mistake. I never meant it. If you hadn't been fool enough to lose your head you'd have seen that!"

He looked at her, as if he could not bring himself to believe that he had heard aright.

"You never——!" he gasped.

She smiled up at him.

"My dear fellow, if you mean that I never loved you, you are quite right I certainly never did!"

He struggled for breath.

"Why—why did you say——?" he panted.

She raised her head upon her hand, and looked at him coldly, contemptuously.

"Oh, for several reasons," she replied. "One, because Morgan wished me to keep you in tow; another, because, well, you were so mad that night that I was obliged to humor you."

He put his hand to his throat as if he were choking.

"Morgan——?" he said.

She nodded.

"Yes; you may as well know th truth. You'd have discovered it sooner or later. You were useful to Morgan, you see."

He did see.

"He—he has robbed me!" he said hoarsely, staring before him vacantly.

"Well, that's a coarse way of putting it; but it's your way to be coarse. It's your nature and you can't help it. If you mean that Morgan—with my help—always managed to win, you're right. Don't blame me. I was under his thumb and had to obey orders. Go and find him and have it out with him. I don't mind," she laughed carelessly.

"You—you helped him!" he said, as if he were half stupefied.

She nodded and yawned.

"Yes; like the good and faithful sister that I am. I've ofted wondered you haven't detected us. I've seen you look up when I've been bending over you, and making signs to him, telling him the cards you held.

"Don't blame me. Go to Morgan, and call him to account."

"No," he said; "I don't blame you you were in his power, under his thumb. But you did it, knowing all the time that I loved you. No!" broke from his strained lips, "I won't believe it! Tell me you are joking, that you are only saying it to tease me! Tell me, Laura!"

He flung himself on his knees beside the couch and tried to take her hand, but she whipped it behind her. He gazed at her piteously. He had meant to confront her, charge her with her faithlessness and treachery, and leave her overwhelmed by his scorn; but the sight of her, of the beautiful face, the graceful figure, had dispelled his rage.

Even now that he had heard her confess, boast of her duplicity and deceit, of the fact that she had helped to swindle and rob him, he could not resist the fascination of her presence, her voice.

"Laura!" he said, hoarsely, "I can't believe it! No woman—least of all you—could do it! See, dear, I know you are joking. You are saying it to—to try me!" He laughed discordantly. "Well, I haven't risen to it; you can't take me in!"

She looked at him with unconcealed contempt.

"You must be mad!" she said.

"I suppose I am!" he said, helplessly. "I—I came here—I followed you to have it out with you, to break the engagement, to cast you off, but I can't—I can't! Even though I find you here, in Deane's rooms—— Where is he?" He broke off, with the abruptness of a man whose mind is in too great a whirl to act consecutively.

"I don't know," she said; "I haven't seen him."

A flash of hope smote across his misery.

"Then—then you did not come to—to meet him?" he said, quickly, with a sharp breath.

"Oh, yes, I did," she said, coolly.

"Then it was by that scoundrel's—by Morgan's orders?" he said, clutching at the hope that she had been forced to come.

She nodded "Yes."

"Laura, forgive me forgive all my doubts of you. I might have known that—that you would not have been so false. Forgive me. I love you Laura. Come away with me now—come home. I will protect you from Morgan. We will be married at once."

She shrank back from him, and stared with cold amazement.

"Come with you!—marry you! Why, didn't I just tell you that I didn't care for you; that I only said what I did, promised to be your wife, because I was obliged? You must be stark, staring mad!"

He put his hand to his hot brow. Indeed, her confession of her baseness, her treachery, had been forgotten for the moment.

"You didn't mean it," he said with a ghastly smile. "You are fooling me, Laura! Come!"

He rose and held out his arms, and bent down as it to lift her from the couch. She sat up and pushed him away from her.

"Come with you! Marry you! Not it there wasn't another man in the world! I—hate you!"

He looked at her, the smile dying away on his face, his eyes distending.

"You—hate me!"

"Yes," she said, between her teeth. "I've always hated you from the first. Why, what is there about you to take any woman's fancy? Look in the glass!" She laughed heartlessly as she pointed behind him.

"And you were always a bear and a savage. Many's the time when you've talked about your love and—and touched me, that I've had hard work to keep myself from crying out! And even Morgan sometimes found it difficult to stand you. If it hadn't been for your money—and I suppose that's gone now, or most of it!"

"Yes; it's gone," he said, dully, mechanically. He felt and looked like a man in a dream, a hideous nightmare which paralized him.

She laughed.

"Well, go, go! Deane—or—or someone will come in, and there will be a scene!"

He did not move, but gazed down at her with his under lip dropping, his eyes vacant and expressionless.

"Do you hear? Why don't you go? I've answered you plainly enough. I've told you that I hate you, and that nothing would induce me to marry you."

"Nothing—induce—you——" he said, after her.

"No! Besides——" She yawned, and stretched out her arms, and looked at the bracelets upon them—"Besides, if I were ever so fond of you, I wouldn't marry you!"

"Why not?" he asked, thickly.

She laughed.

"Because I happen to be married already."

He stared at her, and his lips moved. He was repeating her words again, striving to grasp, to realize, their meaning. "Married—already?"

She nodded.

"Yes!"

"To—to him?" He looked round the room.

She laughed. It amused her to mystify, deceive him.

"Yes—to him," she said.

"Secretly?" he breathed.

"Yes, yes, of course," she answered impatiently.

"All—all the time; even when you said that you loved me—promised to be my wife?"

She made a gesture with her hands, as if she were utterly weary of his questions, his presence.

"Yes, yes! Oh, go and leave me alone! What's the use of staying and worrying me? I never want to see you again!"

She rose and went past him towards the fire-place. Her movement seemed to break the spell, and to release him from its benumbing influence. With a snarl like that of a wild beast, he caught her by the arm and swung her round to him.

"You fiend!" he hissed.

She struggled and uttered a cry. He covered her mouth with his hand and forced her on her knees. As he did so, his foot struck against the Persian dagger which lay among the other things which had been overturned.

He caught it up, jerked the blade from its sheath, and raised it above his head. His hand still covered her mouth, but, if it had not, her tongue would have refused its office, for she was paralyzed by terror.

She fought and struggled with him, but in vain. He held her in the grip of a vice; his bloodshot eyes stared into hers, his hot breath scorched her cheek.

The shining blade was poised above his head for an instant or two, then it gleamed downwards. There was a low, gurgling cry; then, as he released the blade, the body fell away from him in a ghastly heap on the floor.

He knelt beside it, looking at the dead face, at the tiny stream of blood which had already ceased to run. For a moment he did not realize what he had done; then, with a groan and a shudder that shook him from head to foot, he bent over her and moaned her name.

"Laura, Laura, Laura!"

Time moved down the fatal moments with its relentless scythe, It seemed to tick "Murder, murder!" as they fell.

Trevor remained on his knees, staring vacantly at the dead, white face for full five minutes, listening to the accusing clock. Then he rose, and staggered backward to the fireplace; his eyes still fixed on the face, as if they were chained there.

Another five minutes passed before he realized that he was in danger. Someone—he, her husband—her husband!—might come in at any moment. He must fly.

With the instinct of self-preservation, the mechanical desire to conceal his deed, even for a time, he went to the body, slowly, fearfully, and, lifting it carefully, laid it on the couch. His eye caught Gaunt's fur coat, and he took it up and covered the body with it.

As he drew it over the beautiful face—never more beautiful than it was now in the calmness, the placidity, of death—he shivered as it with cold, and a low moan broke from his livid lips. He drew his eyes away slowly, and, taking up his hat, went slowly—and still backward—to the door, and opened it.

There was no one in the corridor. A servant was singing in the servant's room. He closed the door softly, very softly, as if to avoid waking the woman on the couch, and passed quickly, and on tiptoe, down the stairs, and into the street.

And it was not until he had reached the crowded thoroughfare at the end, that he remembered that no one had seen him enter the house or leave it.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DECIMA found herself standing on the pavement outside the Mansions; but she was scarcely conscious of how she got there.

She had put on her things mechanically, hurriedly, and had fled from the house with uncertain feet. As mechanically, hurriedly, she went up the street, and, at the edge of the larger and busier thoroughfare, stood gazing vacantly before her.

A passing cab hailed her, and she got in. But she did not think to tell the man where she wished to be driven, and he had to ask her twice through the door in the roof before she could reply.

At Lady Pauline's door she stood a moment, looking up and down the street with the same expression in her eyes; for she was asking herself whether it was really she, Decima Deane, who was standing there!

She rang at last, and the charwoman let her in.

"Oh, it is you, miss!" she said garrulously. "I've had a bit of fire in your room, thinking it would be more com-

fortable. Would you like to go up now, or can I get you anything?"

"I will go up now," said Decima. Something in the girl's voice startled the woman, and she turned and looked at her.

"You seem tired, miss," she said.

"Yes, that is it; I am tired," said Decima dully. She went into the bedroom. A fire was burning brightly; the woman lit some candles and looked round tentatively.

"Is there anything I can get you, miss? I'm sorry that one of the maids ain't here. Perhaps you'd let me take your boots off for you?"

Decima sank into a chair and thanked her, and the woman took off the wet boots.

"Why miss, you're shivering with cold," she said. "Shall I get you a little something? Lor', I forgot as everything is locked up! But I could run round the corner and get you some brandy, or some port wine."

Decima forced a mechanical smile to her white, wan face.

"Oh, no, no, thank you!" she said. "I shall be warm directly; it was kind of you to make so nice a fire—and, good-night!"

When the door had closed, she sank back and shut her eyes.

What was it that had happened to her? Let her try and think! She had been so happy!—so happy!—only an hour ago—less than an hour ago! What had happened since then?

But only the cause of her happiness came back to her at first. She remembered that Lord Gaunt had come in, that they had sat talking, that his presence had filled her with a kind of gladness and pleasure.

And then—he had told her that he loved her, and, then in a strange, mysterious way, a veil seemed to have been torn aside from her inner life, and she had realized that she loved him, that she had loved him for—oh, ever so long, ever so long!

The color stole to her white face, her eyes became suffused with tears, tears of joy and infinite delight and peace. As she sat there, she could hear his voice—"I love you, I love you!" it had said to her.

Oh, wonderful, life-giving words! She could see his face; it stole between her closed lids and her eyes. The handsome face she loved so dearly! She could feel his kisses upon her lips, upon her hair, and a thrill ran through her, and the touch of color grew to a burning blush.

He loved her! He had said so; his kisses, his eyes, had been even more eloquent, more convincing, than his words.

Oh, how happy she was! To be loved by him! "Every thought is of you! I love you with all my heart and soul! You hold my heart in the hollow of your hand!" What words they were! And they were true, true; for he could not speak falsely.

How happy she was! Was there ever a girl in the world so blessed, so fortunate as she? To be loved by him! To know that his love was so great that he kept her ribbon—the poor, little, faded ribbon!—next his heart, day and night; just because she had worn it in her hair!

How—happy—happy—happy!—Then suddenly, the pang of anguish smote her. But what had happened? Why did this terrible weight, this dragging fear and shame crush out all her happiness? Then she forced herself to remember; and as she recalled the discovery of the portrait, his words, "My wife," and all that had passed afterwards, she opened her eyes and covered them with her hands, and a low cry of misery broke from her white and trembling lips.

He was married! Another woman was his wife; it was not she, Decima, whom he ought to love, whom he could marry. He belonged to someone else. The beautiful woman whose picture he had held in his hands.

Oh, what should she do, what should she do? She leant forward, and rocked herself to and fro. The anguish in her heart was like a physical pain, racking and tearing at her.

She knew what she ought to do. She ought to cease loving him from that moment. It was her duty. Her solemn duty, to tear his image from her heart; to love him no longer, to forget him.

But, alas for poor human nature! She found she could not do this.

It is only the impossible heroines, in impossible, goody-goody novels, who, when they have discovered that the man they love is unworthy of them, or married to another woman, rise and nobly crush down their love, and cast it from their hearts.

She ought to do it; but—well, she could not.

Her face burnt with shame, her heart grew hot midst its pain as she realized that, notwithstanding what she had learnt that evening, notwithstanding that woman was Lord Gaunt's wife, she loved him still.

Ah! where was all Lady Pauline's teaching? In spite of it all, she was bad and wicked—for she could not cast him off! She loved him still. It was horrible, horrible! and her guilt weighed upon her and crushed her, so that her head bent still lower in her shaking hands.

Yet, how was she to help loving him while his last words of entreaty were ringing in her ears? He had knelt to her, as one kneels and prays for life itself. He had said that he could not live without her. And, alas, at that moment her heart echoed his passionate, despairing avowal; she felt that she could not live without him.

She slipped from her chair to her knees, trying to pray for strength to bear this awful sorrow which was breaking her heart; but Gaunt's face rose before her, his voice rang in her ears. Over and over again she went through the scene, until it seemed to be repeating itself in the very room, as if he were still present.

She rose at last, and began to undress, but still mechanically. Every now and then she paused, and looked at her hand. He had held it; she could feel his hand gripping it still. As she parted her hair from her forehead, she could feel his hand upon her head, the caressing fingers, the lingering kiss.

"Heaven help me; what shall I do?" she wailed. "I love him! Why did he make me love him so?"

Then she remembered his misery and anguish, and a hot wave of pity swept over her, and swept away, for a time, her own sorrow and bitterness. How he, too, must be suffering. He had said that he loved her a thousand times better than she loved him—it was not possible, of course—but how he must be suffering! She remembered the expression of his face, the agony ringing in his voice.

And she would never see him again! The thought struck her heart like ice. Never to see him again! All her life! And she was so young! Why, she might live to be an old woman! All those terrible years stretching before her, in which she should go on loving and longing for him, and with no hope of seeing him again!

Oh, why could she not die? It would be so good to die now, this moment, with his dear voice ringing in her ears, his kisses still warm upon her lips.

She had not been so very wicked; she had tried to lead the good life aunt Pauline had held up for her; would not Heaven be merciful, and let her die?

If they could only both die together, he and she, hand in hand, looking into each other's eyes, and pass away from this cruel worlo into that other of peace and rest!

She laughed piteously.

"No, I shall not die!" she said, aloud. "I am young and strong, and I shall go on living for years"—she shuddered—"for years, living, and living for him!"

She threw herself on the bed at last, but she could not sleep. The scene she had gone through passed through her brain, before her eyes, again and again; it was like a scene in a play.

Now and again it seemed to her that he was bending over her, and she put out her hand as if to thrust him away, sobbing: "No, no! She is your wife! It is she whom you love, not me! You must not touch me—kiss me!"

Towards morning she fell into a deep sleep of exhaustion; but the sleep was one long dream, in which Gaunt knelt before her, clutching at her arm, his voice rising and falling in the anguish of his entreaty.

A little after eight o'clock the charwoman knocked at the door, and Decima awoke. She tried to rise, but could not. She felt as if her limbs were weighted with lead, as if there was one spot in her brain burning like a hot coal.

The woman knocked again, and Decima called to her to come in. Her voice sounded weak and strained, and the woman hurried to the bed, with a vague alarm, which grew into definite dismay, as she looked at the white face, with the two spots of livid crimson glowing under the glittering eyes.

"Lor', miss, ain't you well?" she said, aghast. "You look—you look as if you was in a fever, that you do! You must 'ave got a chill last night!"

Decima eyed her with profound indifference.

"Yes; I think I am ill," she said, as if she was speaking to someone else, someone who did not matter in the least, was of no possible importance. "I feel as if I could not move, and—and—my head is on fire."

The woman was alarmed.

"I'll—I'll go for a doctor," she said, half speaking to herself. "I don't like the looks of you at all, miss."

Decima smiled indifferently—it was a piteous smile! "Do you think I am going to die?" she asked calmly, almost hopefully.

The woman forced a laugh. "Not you, miss!" she said. "It's only a feverish cold as 'ave took 'old of you!"

Decima sighed, and turned her head away; and the woman, after looking round helplessly for a moment, stole from the room, and did the most sensible thing she could have done. There was a telegraph office within a few yards, and she wired to Lady Pauline, and then hurried on to the nearest doctor.

When she came back, Decima was staring at the ceiling with eyes which shone and glittered with fever, and her hands were clenched on the satin coverlet, as if she were holding on to consciousness by a supreme effort of will.

When Lady Pauline arrived, she found the doctor bending over Decima, applying iced bandages to the burning head. He greeted Lady Pauline with a silent nod; and in silence for a moment, she knelt beside the bed. Then she said in a tremulous whisper:

"She is very ill! What is it?"

"Brain fever," he said gravely and aloud. There was no need to whisper, for Decima could not hear.

"How did she come here? I know nothing!" she said, as she took off her bonnet and cloak. He was her own doctor, and he spoke with the candor which he knew she desired, and would approve.

"She came last night, about four o'clock, so the charwoman tells me. Then she went out—to her brother's—and returned about ten. She was quite well on her first arrival, so the woman says; but looked pale and tired when she came in later."

"Brain fever!" said Lady Pauline, calm, and on the alert by this time. "I don't understand!"

He shook his head gravely.

"Severe brain fever," he said. Absolute candor was always required, demanded, by Lady Pauline, and he knew it. "There was no other trouble. Something was on her mind, something must have occurred between the interval of her first arrival and her return to this house."

Lady Pauline stared at him.

"What could have happened?" she said.

"That we have to discover," he said, quietly. "She must be kept quiet; but you know the treatment as well as I do, Lady Pauline." Lady Pauline had, for a time, been a hospital nurse in her younger days. "I'll come back in an hour or two. Keep the ice bandages going; and if she should recover consciousness before I return, keep her as tranquil as possible."

Lady Pauline stood beside the bed with tightly compressed lips and aching heart. What had they done to this girl whom she loved with a mother's love? The charwoman stole in presently; and Lady Pauline questioned her.

She could tell no more than the doctor had already told. Lady Pauline sent her with a wire to the servants to return, and resumed her place beside the unconscious girl. The doctor came in again, within his time.

"Something has happened to her, some shock," he said. "I can do nothing for her that you cannot do, Lady Pauline. Absolute quiet, tranquility: that is all."

The hours dragged through. Later, Lady Pauline saw the white eyelids quiver, and presently Decima looked up at her.

"Aunt Pauline?" she said, in the thin, strained voice of fever.

"Yes; it is I, Decie, dear."

The burning lips smiled woefully. "I am glad you have come, very glad. Aunt Pauline?"

"Yes, dear."

"Will you please tell Mr. Mershon that I cannot marry him?"

Lady Pauline repressed the start. Was the poor child delirious? But Decima smiled again, as if she read the question—the doubt.

"No; I am quite sensible, dear," she said. "I promised Mr. Mershon—but, you see I didn't know then that I loved him."

"Him? Who?" asked Lady Pauline.

Decima stared at her as if surprised that the question should be necessary.

"Lord Gaunt," she said, quietly.

Lady Pauline could not repress the start now.

"Lord Gaunt!" she echoed.

Decima's hands clutched at the coverlet with feverish violence, but her voice, thin and hollow though it was, was calm and free from delirium.

"Yes," she said. "Didn't you know? I loved him, and"—an exquisite smile lit up her face, making its pale loveliness angelic by its intensity—"he loves me."

Lady Pauline permitted a groan to escape her.

"He loves me," continued Decima. "We shall never see each other again, never. But I cannot marry Mr. Mershon; not even to save father and Bobby! Poor Bobby! I am sorry; but I cannot do it! I could have done it if—if I had not seen him—when was it? I forget! Was it long ago, years ago? But I know that he loves me, and I love him.

"I shall never see him again; but I can't marry Mr. Mershon, or anyone else. It is a pity, isn't it? But I cannot! Will you write to him and tell him? He lives at the Firs, Leafmore—" Her mind wandered for a moment. "Leafmore! How beautiful it is! If he would only stay. The schools—the cottages—the church! How good he is! He does all we ask him! How good he is! And I love him, love him, love him! His wife! No, I can't be his wife! There is another woman. Oh, why did he make me love him so?"

She moved her head from side to side, with feverish restlessness, then, as if with an effort, she came back to full consciousness.

"Write to—to Mr. Mershon at once, Aunt Pauline. Tell him that I cannot, cannot! Ask him not to be angry! I know I am very wicked. Well, that is all, isn't it? I love him, love him! Promise, Aunt Pauline! I am slipping away—the light—the fire—all is growing dim. I can't see your face, though I know you are there! Promise!

Lady Pauline bent over her.

"I promise. Be satisfied, dear!" she said, and Decima closed her eyes and drew a long sigh of relief.

* * * * * *

Gaunt found himself in the street outside the Mansions, very much in the condition in which Decima had been.

His brain was in a whirl. For his life had, so to speak, ended. He had lost Decima, the girl-love, who had filled his heart, who had been the one star shining in his darkened life. He had lost her; and it was well! He shuddered as he thought of the risk she had run through his overwhelming temptation.

If Laura, his wife—his wife! had not appeared, what would have happened? Decima would have gone with him, and he would have wrecked the life of the sweetest, the purest of women!

He shuddered again, and an icy blast seemed to sweep over him. He felt cold, and remembered his fur coat at that moment, so absolutely physical was the sensation which assailed him.

He could not go back for the coat. He buttoned the shooting jacket, and went on. For a time he walked without any thought of the direction he was taking, but suddenly he looked round and found himself before Lady Pauline's house in the square.

He gazed up at the windows; there was a light only in one; it must be her room, she was there. Scarcely knowing what he was doing, he stretched his arms out towards the light, and groaned.

He paced up and down for a moment or two, until, indeed, a policeman eyed him suspiciously, and crossed over the road to inspect him more closely; then Gaunt turned and strode on.

He had put up for the night at a quiet hotel in St. James'; one of those old-fashioned places which men of Gaunt's tastes prefer. It was small, and not by any means gorgeous, but it was exclusive, and more expensive than any of the modern palatial caravanseries.

The butler—the head waiter was always called the butler—met him in the small hall, prepared to help him off with his coat into which the man had assisted him, and was rather surprised at seeing Gaunt without it.

"I have left my coat at the—club, Wilkins," said Gaunt.

"Yes, my lord; I will send for it," said Wilkins, promptly, but Gaunt shook his head.

"Never mind," he said. "I will pick it up as I drive over to the station to-morrow."

As he spoke, he handed his hat to the man, and Wilkins, taking it, saw the streak of blood on Gaunt's wrist.

"Have you cut your hand, my lord?" he asked; he had known Gaunt ever since he was a boy.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

REVERIE.

BY. K. C.

I wander, at dawn, to the side of the river,
The soft winds just flutter in odorous sighs,
Aurora's fair, roseate banners slow quiver
And trail their pink pennons across the pale skies.
The songsters are pruning their wee, downy feathers,
And practicing trills in their matinal lay;
The blossoms, a-trembling with sweet expectation,
Are waiting to welcome the advent of day.

How fit for sweet thoughts is the hour of dawning—
Of thoughts that no mortal can put into words!
What questionings thrill through my bosom this morning,
As I gaze at the lily and list to the birds!
Will I build me a nest like the sweet, joyous songster,
Somewhere 'neath the arch of the heaven's blue dome,
And, like their wings, fold up my fond aspirations,
Contented to dwell in the bosom of home?

Or, like as the lily floats down the calm water,
Its heart ever turned to the far, arching sky,
Will I pass life away, just contemplation's daughter,
Forgot by, forgetting, the world rushing by?
Who knows? 'Tis His will that alone can decide it;
Let me be submissive whate'er it may be—
If to build like the birds, or to float like the lily,
On life's drifting tide, to eternity's sea!

The Prodigal's Return.

BY R. D.

A YOUNG man was trudging wearily along a lonely country road, on a gray November day, with the rain falling ceaselessly and the wind soughing mournfully among the leafless branches of the trees.

It was certainly not a day to raise the spirits of a prodigal returning to his home. The rain, the gathering gloom, and the long lonely road inspired him with a gloomy feeling as to the welcome he would receive, and also impress him with a chill sense of the vanity of the things for which he had bartered his inheritance.

He began to wonder why he had come back at all. Lying on a bed of sickness, he had been seized by a strange impulse to return to his old home—an impulse which had eventually grown too strong to be resisted.

It was not to ask help of his father that he had come, though he was penniless, and the clothes he wore were threadbare. His father, stern and vindictive, had long ago cast him off, and sworn never to help him again.

It was a common enough story. The only son of a rich father, with every wish gratified, with love lavished upon him, the young man had given way to the reckless indulgence of will and passions.

The parental love had been tried, wounded, and, finally, hopelessly alienated. There had been angry words, bitter reproaches, reckless defiance on the son's part, a departure from the old home, followed by a wildly extravagant life in the great world of London, and at last poverty and illness.

At length the lights of the village of Strathmore came in sight, and shortly afterwards the weary traveler passed the first few scattered cottages and came to the village green.

It was deserted. On such a night no one would venture out unless compelled. But the young man, in his dread of being recognized, drew up the collar of his coat and pulled his hat well down over his eyes.

He stood still for a moment on the green, thinking, his face hard and defiant; yet there was a strange dull pain at his heart, for old memories were crowding upon him.

After a while a softened look came into his eyes, and he hastily crossed the sodden turf, and went towards one of the houses, from the window of which a dim light shone.

It was the village post office. Without hesitation, he opened the door and entered. He found himself in a small square room, which was lighted by a lamp. The window was full of flowers, some coral pink geraniums being still in bloom.

At the opposite side of the room was a broad shelf, running the whole length of the wall. A pile of men's clothes lay at one end; at the other were the various articles appertaining to the post office.

Near the window stood a large table, on which a white-haired pleasant-faced old man, the father of the postmistress, was seated, engaged in repairing a corduroy garment, for he was the village tailor. As the young man entered he looked up over his spectacles with a kindly smile.

"A bad night, sir," he said, wondering who the shabby rain-drenched stranger could be, for he knew every one for miles round. "You are too late for post."

A few minutes before the young man had not wished to be recognized, yet the total absence of recollection on the part of the old man, who had been one of the staunchest friends of his boyhood, hurt him keenly.

"And so you don't remember me, Galloway?" he said, with a short hard laugh. "Or do you wish to cut me, like all the rest?"

The old man started, dropped his work, and bent forward to look into the stranger's haggard face, amazement and incredulity being evident on his own. Then he flung aside his work, and, scrambling off the table as quickly as his rheumatism would allow, he caught the young man's hands in his, and shook them vigorously, uttering incoherent exclamations of delight, wonder, and pity.

For Ralph Gilbert's story was well known, and those who had loved him in the old days—and they were not a few, in spite of his faults—often agreed among themselves that, if the son had been reckless and wild, the father had been harsh and unforgiving.

"And the old gentleman will be mighty glad to see you, sir!" he said. "He's not been the same since you left. Why, Jane! Jane!"—as a door leading to an inner room opened, and a tall neatly-dressed young woman appeared—"here's Mr. Ralph come home again. Why, Master Ralph, she was a thin slip of a girl when you went away, ten years ago, and now——"

"Now, father," began Jane, who, like most of her sex, disapproved of any allusion to her age. But she was genuinely glad to see the young man.

"Oh, Miss Masters," exclaimed Jane, as the door of the inner room opened again, and a young lady stood on the threshold, "you'll be glad, I know! She's always been asking when we thought you would come back, Mr. Ralph—and here he is at last, miss!"

Ralph turned with natural curiosity to know who it was who had so desired his return, and he saw a slim young girl, with a pale face and large dark eyes. He did not know the girl; but her great beauty and dainty attire made him suddenly conscious of his own shabby miserable appearance.

She stood quite still, her long fur mantle hanging over her arm, while Jane volubly explained that she had brought some jelly for Mrs. Galloway, who was an invalid.

Miss Masters looked at Ralph so steadily that he grew more and more confused. Then she came slowly forward, and, as the light from the lamp fell upon her eyes, Ralph was struck by their expression. They were full of unutterable dread and shrinking, which did not leave them even when she spoke to him.

"I am glad you have come back," she said, in steady even tones. "You should not have stayed away so long; your father is old and ill."

She was seized with a sudden fit of trembling, and made a sign to Jane to help her on with her cloak.

"Goodness, miss, how cold you are!" exclaimed Jane, as she accidentally touched the little ungloved hand. "Do have a warm before going out!"

But Miss Masters did not reply. With a hurried "Good night" to the old man, and a scarcely-perceptible bow to Ralph, she moved to the door. The young man opened it for her; and, without looking at him or speaking to him again, she passed out into the darkness.

"What a night for a young lady to be out in!" Ralph exclaimed, as the door closed. "All alone too! Who is she?"

"That's Miss Masters, the daughter of the lady who is Mr. Gilbert's housekeeper," said Jane. "She came home from school six months ago, and has lived there ever since. She's a dear young lady!"

"And afraid of nothing," the old man added, with a kindly laugh. "Darkness and rain don't trouble her. Not a soul would harm her; and where there's sickness or trouble there she is."

Ralph thought of the unmistakable fear in her eyes. She was certainly afraid of something—but of what?

"And you can't think how anxious she's been for you to come home, sir!" continued Jane. "And I'm sure you ought to feel flattered"—with a meaning laugh. "She's the loveliest young lady I've seen, and a deal nicer——" Jane stopped, but she looked as if she would have liked to go on.

"I did not know my father had a new housekeeper," said Gilbert, in regretful tones. "Is Mrs. Terry dead?"

"No, sir," the old man answered reluctantly. "Mr. Gilbert seemed to take a dislike to her, and sent her away. You will find a good many changes up there. Most of the old servants have gone. There's a new doctor too. Two years ago Mrs. Masters came. She's quite different to Martha Terry. A real lady, though Jane doesn't like her; but there's no accounting for womenfolk's likes and dislikes."

"There are others who don't like her father," retorted Jane. "And I can't abide that new doctor either, with his sleek smiling ways! And—and—well, I am very glad you have come home, sir!"

"You forget, Jane," said Ralph, with a bitter smile—"my father mayn't be so anxious to see me."

He did not wait for an answer, but turned and went out once more into the dreary night.

Ralph slept that night at the Bear Inn, a picturesque, red-tiled old house at the entrance of the village. He had made up his mind to leave the place the first thing the next morning.

The familiar surroundings had awakened memories which filled him with pain. Everything seemed to accentuate his miserable poverty and humiliation. It was unlikely that his father would see him.

He could not go and sue for mercy and forgiveness. The breach between them was too wide to be bridged over. A meeting would but make the old wounds bleed afresh. No—it was best that he should go back by the way he had come, never to return. His father was old and ill—why should he inflict the useless pain of a meeting upon him?

He went straight up to his room at the inn, unrecognized by any one. They brought him something to eat; he had but little appetite however, and, after wearily pacing to and fro for a time, his thoughts dwelling upon his wasted life, he fell asleep. It was here, in the quaint old-fashioned chamber of the inn, with its four-post bedstead and chintz hangings of a bygone date, with the fire flickering in the grate and casting fantastic shadows on the walls, that Ralph Gilbert dreamed a strange dream.

He was out once more in the rain and darkness, on the road leading to his father's house. The country was flooded, the heavy rains of the last few days having caused the river to overflow its banks, and fields and lanes were under water. Down in the dip of the road, between the village and his father's house, the water was always deep.

It was dangerous, by reason of its currents and the deep ditches that lay on either side of the road. Ralph knew that this part would be impassable; still he hurried on, driven by an impulse stronger than his will.

The wind, blowing in fitful gusts, was driving the clouds across the sky. The moon, which was at the full, seemed at times to be sailing on a sea of wind-tossed waves, sinking at moments into their seething depths.

Just as Ralph, in his dream, reached the edge of the water that filled the hollow in the road, the moon shone out clearly and brilliantly, lighting up the whole scene. The tops of the hedgerows on either side of the road rose black and bare above the turbid waters.

As he stood and looked, he saw standing on the other side of the water the girl he had seen in the post office. Her eyes had the same terrified expression in them.

She was looking at him, and seemed to be speaking, but he could not hear her voice above the sound of the rushing swirling water.

She raised her hands with a passionate gesture, and then he knew that she had been calling to him. He started forward to go to her, but at this point he awoke. The dream had been so vivid that he found himself sitting up in bed, his hands still outstretched, as he had flung them out in answer to the piteous appeal to come to the girl's aid.

Lying down again, after a while he tried to sleep; but the remainder of the night was spent in broken fitful slumber, and he got up in the morning with a strange sense of depression.

Try as he would, he could not throw off the feeling, nor could he banish the dream from his thoughts. He was oppressed by a foreboding of trouble; the idea became firmly fixed in his mind that in some way his presence was needed in his father's house, and that the strange look in Miss Masters' eyes meant that she was cognizant of that need. The feeling grew upon him, until at length he was possessed by a burning impatience to go and ascertain what was wrong.

Immediately breakfast was over he left the inn, and, passing through the village, went towards the road which led to his father's house. As he drew nearer to his old home the memory of his dream came to him with tenfold force.

The waters were out. The rain had been falling heavily for days, but had ceased that morning. He hoped the floods would not prevent his passing through the dip in the road.

If the water covered the footway, he would have to go a long way round in order to reach the house. The thought of the delay became more intolerable as he hastened on. The feeling that his help was needed became stronger with every step he took. Fancy, superstition, presentiment—whatever it might be—he must now go to his father.

The first sight of the hollow convinced him that to pass through it on foot was impossible. At this point another road branched off to the right. Looking down this road he saw a groom in a high dog-cart, driving towards him through the water, which was shallower just there. This was his only chance, and he asked the man to drive him through the flood; but the groom refused, saying that the water was deep and the current dangerous.

Ralph, almost beside himself with eagerness and impatience, offered him half a sovereign, the last coin he had in the world. The groom then consented, and a few moments later Gilbert found himself on the other side of the water, and was hurrying on again towards Bellenden Manor.

The clock tower of the stables came in sight at last. On the opposite side of the way was the house, surrounded by great trees. Ralph's face was very pale, and his heart was beating so that he could hardly breathe, when he reached the gates of his old home.

* * * * * * *

"My dear Jane, it is no use reproaching me so bitterly. You may thank me for keeping you in check—otherwise, instead of having a fortune in your hands, you might have been standing now with your neck in a noose!"—and the speaker smiled cynically.

Doctor Nash and Mrs. Masters were talking together in Mrs. Masters' sitting room in Bellenden Manor. She had sent for him early in the morning, but he had not arrived until after breakfast. He and Mrs. Masters had been in private conversation for the last ten minutes.

Doctor Nash was a great friend of Mrs. Masters'. He had come to Strathmore shortly after she accepted the post of housekeeper to old Mr. Gilbert. He had taken a small cottage at a little distance from Bellenden Manor.

It was at her suggestion that Mr. Gilbert, after dismissing his old doctor, had sent for Doctor Nash and appointed him his medical adviser, though Doctor Nash himself had said he had no desire to establish a practice, and had only come to Strathmore for the hunting.

He had risen very high in the old man's favor, and Mr. Gilbert acknowledged when he was in a good temper that Doctor Nash was the cleverest doctor he had ever met.

But old Mr. Gilbert was not always in a good temper, and, great as was the influence that Mrs. Masters and Doctor Nash had gained over him, they found him at times most unmanageable. She was speaking bitterly as to this fact now.

"And a nice lot of good your caution has done us, Jim!" It was only when alone that they addressed each other by their Christian names. They were brother and sister, though it was not convenient to have the fact generally known.

"The will drawn up in my favor is not yet signed, and that scamp of a son is here! If the old fool once sees him, there is no knowing what may happen. I believe, in spite of all I've said, the old man has still a hankering after him."

"If you have failed," the doctor returned in angry tones, "you have Eunice to thank for it! I am certain she has been doing her best to get Ralph Gilbert back into his father's good graces!"

"She's too great a coward!" said Eunice's mother contemptuously. "She is frightened to death of you and me, and we must keep her so. I can't imagine where she gets her foolish romantic ideas from!"

The doctor looked doubtful, but Mrs. Masters went on impetuously, though still in a low tone.

"I'm sick to death of this slow doctoring! The old wretch will live on for ever at this rate! You must make an end—it's safe enough now; people will be prepared after his long illness——"

"For gracious sake be careful, Jane!" the man cried, his face turning pale. "Until the will is signed——"

"You're a perfect fool, Jim!" Mrs. Masters hissed, her handsome face contorted by greed and rage. "It will never be signed if he once sees his son—I am certain of it! And Ralph Gilbert will be here to-day! Eunice actually dared to tell me last night that she had begged him to hurry! I have ordered her to stay in her room for the next three days, and have told them down stairs that the young man is on no account to be admitted.

"But suppose by any chance he should get in? No! Jim, you'll give the final dose to-day, and, when he is too weak and dazed to resist, I will get him to sign the will. Then his son may do as he pleases. Who will suspect us? That poison leaves no trace—at least to those who are ignorant of its composition—and who does know it but you? And the will will cause little surprise, as all the world knows how the old man hates his son; and he has no other near relatives."

After a little more persuasion, the doctor assented to his sister's proposal. He recognized quite as well as she did the importance of immediate action. Ralph's return was a great danger. He felt certain, too, that for some time old Mr. Gilbert had softened towards his son, and he strongly suspected Eunice had had a hand in the matter.

He was sure that the girl, from whom their plans had of course been kept secret, had begun to suspect their designs against the old man. The girl had changed in a remarkable manner during the past three months.

All the merry schoolgirl light-heartedness had vanished, and she was growing paler and quieter every day, while her eyes had a frightened look in them. She shrank, too, from her mother and herself, and, except when she was compelled, never spent a moment in their society. If she went boldly over to the enemy they would be lost. The doctor turned pale at the mere thought.

Ralph Gilbert was just the kind of a man to appeal to the romantic fancy of a girl. That there was any nobler reason for Eunice's pity for the young man and her desire to help him never entered her uncle's head. He had long since ceased to believe that it was possible for men or women to be good or disinterested.

After his interview with his sister, the doctor hastened to his own cottage to prepare a fatal dose of the drug with which he had been slowly sapping the old man's physical and mental powers. He was to return at luncheon-time to administer the dose. Mrs. Masters gave final orders to the butler that he should on no account allow Ralph Gilbert to enter the house.

Some time later the door bell rang, as she had expected. It was Ralph Gilbert. The butler who opened the door was a new servant.

The old one, who had been a staunch friend of the young man during his boyhood and early manhood, had incurred the displeasure of his master shortly after Mrs. Masters' arrival, and, as had been the case with nearly all the other old servants, he had been dismissed. The new man was a creature of the housekeeper's. It was a shock to Ralph to see the untamiliar face of the new butler.

The visitor's shabby clothes did not impress the man in his favor. His manner was decidedly insolent when, in reply to Ralph's question, he stated that Mr. Gilbert was ill and could see no one.

The butler's manner and the way in which he spoke roused Ralph, who was excited by the thought of the coming meeting.

"I will come in!" he said haughtily, stepping on to the threshold. "I am Mr. Ralph Gilbert!"

The butler, holding the door so as to prevent his entrance, burst into an insolent laugh.

"Oh, then, if you're Mr. Ralph Gilbert, my orders is still more strict! You're not to be let in on no account." And, before Ralph could utter a word, the man had thrust him from the doorway and slammed the door in his face.

For a moment Ralph stood as if dazed, and then he turned and walked back down the drive, furious at the man's insult. Why had he come? To be driven both by his father's paid servants! To be the butt of that despicable wretch's insolence!

A cold gray mist was fast enveloping everything; but Ralph did not even feel its chilliness as, full of grief and rage, he stumbled out into the high road.

Never again, he determined, would he return to his father's house!

A little door in the wall suddenly opened as he was striding past it, and a girl ran out, bareheaded, into the chill mist, and seized his arm.

Her face was deathly white, her golden hair in disorder. She clung to him, with a torrent of broken incoherent sentences which at first he could scarcely understand.

"You must not go away!" the girl cried. "I am afraid—afraid! Oh, I am not sure of anything! And she is my mother! What am I saying? Of course I don't know anything; but your father is rich and we are so poor! And last night I lay awake and fancied all sorts of horrible things; and there seemed no one who would do anything but you, and I prayed that you would come. I knew that they would send you away; so I got out of my room, and have been waiting here. But you must not go away. For your father's sake and ours, you must not!" Then she let go his arm, and, trembling violently, put her hands over her eyes and broke into wild sobbing. Ralph's rage was giving place to bewilderment and fear.

"Go into the house!" the girl cried, again seizing his hands. "I will take you in if—if they kill me for it! But promise me this—that, whatever you find, you will be merciful to me and mine! It is I who have warned you! But make haste, or it will be too late!"

She drew him through the doorway, which led into a shrubbery. She hurried on through the dripping shrubs and trees. As Ralph followed her, his mind became calmer, and he thought of other things besides his father's imminent peril.

He remembered the girl who had come to warn him. He now saw that she was bareheaded, and that she had only thin shoes on her feet. He took her hand—it was icy cold.

He remembered what she had said when she offered to take him into the house. Then he recollected a way of entrance he had used when a boy. If it were not closed up, he could enter by it again, without letting his companion incur any risk by taking him in.

"Go into the house!" he said hoarsely, though not unkindly. "I can get in by myself. As it is, perhaps you will suffer——"

The girl shook her head.

"Make haste!" she whispered faintly. "If you want me, come back here—but don't stop now!"

Ralph hurried on, leaving the girl standing alone in the chilly fog, at the mercy of—— He dared not think. The mist was in his favor. It was now growing so dense that it was difficult to see half a yard before him. He reached the house unobserved. Close to the window of a room which used to be his grew a tree.

By climbing it he would reach the window. If he could get in there he would be safe. A secret passage connected this room with the suite of apartments his father had always occupied. He had often used this passage to reach his father's rooms, delighting, boylike, in the secret, which was known only to himself and his father.

If his father still occupied the same rooms, and the passage remained unclosed, he could easily get to him. He succeeded in opening the window, and entered the room, which had been shut up ever since he went away.

The dust lay thick on everything, but he was too anxious to notice that. He found the panel that opened into the passage, and hurried through the darkness. He remembered every inch of the way, and soon found himself at the point of communication with his father's bedroom.

He had to exercise extreme caution, for Mrs. Masters might be there. He touched a spring in the wall, and a door flew back, but he allowed it to open only a little way. He remembered that this door was at the side of his father's bed, and, if the position of the furniture was unchanged, the large bed, with its old-fashioned hangings, would conceal him, while he would be able to see the greater part of the room.

Ralph looked through the narrow opening; nothing appeared to have been altered. The room was lighted by a lamp, on account of the fog. A table, set for luncheon, stood near the fireplace. He drew a deep breath. His father was seated at the table. The young man was shocked by the change in him that ten years had wrought.

His father was a mere wreck of his former self. A flood of remorse, shame, pain, swept over Ralph, and his eyes filled with tears. When he had brushed them away, he saw a man and a woman standing on either side of his father. These, he concluded, were Mrs Masters and Doctor Nash. Mrs. Masters was speaking to the old man in a soothing tone. He was evidently in a difficult mood.

"I won't take any more of your medicines, doctor!" he was saying, in a shrill querulous tone. "They always make me feel worse! I never felt bad after Allen's medicines. I've a good mind to get him to come up and see me."

"There—don't be angry with poor Doctor Nash!" cried Mrs. Masters, with a pleasant laugh. "You sha'n't have any more of his medicines, if I can help it. Let me pour you out some wine. And try and eat your luncheon. I told cook to take special pains to-day. Why, William, you have forgotten your master's table napkin! How careless you are!"

The valet, a dull-looking man, who came into the room at this moment, seemed a little surprised.

"I thought it was there," he said. "I will get it." As he turned away, Mrs. Masters took up the wine glass from the table and filled it from the decanter she had in her other hand.

Then, with a swift movement, she drew back, and, putting one hand behind the old man, held out the glass to Doctor Nash, who stood at the back of the old man's chair. Quickly he dropped part of the contents of the phial into it.

It was so coolly, so daringly done that Ralph, seeing it all, stood motionless, the blood seeming frozen in his veins. A moment later Mrs. Masters and the doctor retired, leaving the valet, who had returned, to hand the wine to his master, and to wait upon him.

For a moment Ralph hesitated. His sudden appearance might kill his father. But it must be risked.

At that moment Mr. Gilbert sent the valet from the room.

Ralph felt that he must show himself now, so he pushed the door wide open.

"Father!" he cried, scarcely knowing in his anxiety and remorse whether he spoke or not. All the hardness and bitterness had gone, and there was only the old affection between them. The old man heard the sound, and, turning, saw the tall figure of his son emerging from the secret passage, as he had so often seen it in the days long past. Then he stumbled to his feet.

"Father, can you forgive me?" the young man murmured, tears streaming down his cheeks.

The old man stretched out his hands, and father and son were reconciled.

* * * * * *

So the dream had a strange fulfilment. At least Ralph always believed that it was the dream that had prevented the commission of the crime, and he always believed too that but for Eunice he would never have had the warning.

It was her passionate longing for him to come which had awakened an answering echo in his own heart. When the news of the reconciliation spread through the house, Dr. Nash hurried away, taking the first train to London. Mrs. Masters tried to brazen the matter out; but, confronted with the wine-glass, she was utterly crushed.

Neither she nor the Doctor was brought to justice. For the sake of Eunice, the mother was forgiven. But the Doctor, a craven at heart, did not wait to see what his fate was to be, but committed suicide. Eunice went away with her mother, although Mr. Gilbert offered to provide for her.

Mrs. Masters never recovered from the shock and mortification of her discovered guilt. She fretted and chafed against the secluded life she was compelled to lead. And one day she was found dead in her bed.

Old Mr. Gilbert is dead too. Ralph reigns at Bellenden Manor, and the name of his wife is Eunice.

It required long and patient wooing to gain her consent, for many years elapsed before she would overlook the crime of which her mother had been nearly guilty.

The possibilities of paper as a material for costumes were fully displayed at a dinner recently given in Paris by a hostess who each year gives a gastronomic entertainment, which is one of the greatest events of the season. This year all the guests were asked to come in paper, and very many less pleasing dresses might have been seen if all the fabrics of the first modistes in Paris had been at the disposal of the wearers. White paper with a gold design was worn by several ladies, and was very effective; brown paper and silver made a very pretty contrast.

Scientific and Useful.

CLEANING AND POLISHING STOVES.—Mix finely-powdered black-lead to a paste with water in which a small amount of glue has been dissolved.

ELECTRIC LAMPS.—The bulb of an electric lamp should never be inclosed in any fabric. If wrapped in tissue paper so that no air can pass between it and the glass, the paper will soon be on fire.

TILES.—Paper tiles are said to have numerous advantages over the ordinary ones, being lighter, harder, and also impervious to damp. Furthermore, they are non-conductors of heat and sound, and look better than the old kind.

LIBRARY SHELVES.—Glass library shelves have recently been introduced in France. The edges are rounded. The glass is nearly inflexible, which gives it great advantage over wood. Its strength has been proved. It is more easily kept clean than other shelving. The appearance of the library is greatly enhanced. The book people who have used it are enthusiastic.

CERAMIC STONES.—This name has been given by a French inventor to a new building stone obtained by him from broken glass. The glass—broken bottles, window panes, etc.—is reduced to powder, different kinds are mixed if variegated color is desired, and the pulverized material is devitrified by passing successively through two furnaces, the second being one of high temperature. The pasty mass is then passed under a press, which gives it shape and consistence.

ELECTRIC IRONS.—The use of electrically heated irons in laundries, shirt factories and other places where a considerable amount of ironing is done, is said to be generally appreciated as a great improvement on the old system of gas heating. Two irons are used as a rule, no time being lost in work, other than pressing, and in summer, with the gas, the atmosphere of a pressing room becomes almost insufferable. The only remedy for this overheating seems to be electric irons, and it is a remedy that is being wisely considered.

Farm and Garden.

BAULK IN HORSES.—If your horse baulks, do not lose your patience and commence to whip. Adjust his collar, pick up his foot and make him believe you are doing something for him, and usually he will forget to baulk.

WARMTH.—Sudden changes in the temperature materially affect the flow of milk. Every farmer has noticed how much the flow of milk has diminished when the weather suddenly turns cold at night. Therefore we should see to it that the cows are protected from sudden changes in the weather.

HORSESHOES.—An ingenious Belgian has patented a simple arrangement by which two blocks of cork can be securely clamped into an ordinary horseshoe. The cork, it is claimed, lasts as long as the shoe itself, renders slipping on greasy or frosty pavements impossible, and makes "going" light and easy.

DEHORNING.—An exchange gives the following for dehorning calves: Go to a drug store, get a stick of caustic potash. Put it in a bottle and cork tight till needed. When calf is ten days old, wrap a rag around the stick of potash (to protect your hands), secure the calf, clip hair over horn buttons, and apply potash on the horn only. Rub until hair and hide are off, no more. Avoid any water. Keep calf dry. One cent and fifteen minutes time, with good judgment, make a muley of any calf.

WRINKLES TELL. "The popular idea that the age of a horse can always be told by looking at his teeth," said a veterinary surgeon, "is not entirely correct. After the eighth year the horse has no more new teeth, so that the tooth method is useless for telling the age of a horse which is more than eight years old. As soon as the set of teeth is complete, however, a wrinkle begins to appear on the upper edge of the lower eyelid, and a new wrinkle is added each year, so that to get at the age of a horse more than eight years old you must figure the teeth plus the wrinkles."

I have used Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant in my family for Croup, and I find nothing to equal it. EX-T. DAVENPORT, Valley Head, Alabama, Oct. 18, 1886.

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On Sociability.

If sociability is not one of the highest of the virtues, it is certainly one of the pleasantest, and it hides more faults in a man and makes us forgive him more weaknesses than would many a sterling quality of severest aspect. We cannot help having a soft place in our hearts for the people who are easy to live with. And then, as a rule, the sociable man gains this attractive quality through being himself sympathetic. Sociability usually indicates a certain largeness of interest, the desire to enter, at least superficially, into the thoughts and pleasures of others, whether that desire be accompanied by depth of experience and breadth of information, or not. Sociability is antagonistic to selfishness. It is an easy-going virtue, which need not reach any heroic height, but which nevertheless is exceedingly attractive, "livable," and humanizing.

The higher one goes in the social scale, the more restricted does sociability become, until it is practically non existent. Much of the convention that has grown up in society is inevitable and useful. It is a product of civilized society, and cannot be divorced from it. A common levelling and the breaking down of all social barriers could only mean a temporary derangement, which would quickly develop once more into a condition differing but little from that which we experience to-day. An individual has a perfect right to choose his or her friends, and we cannot say that it is the duty of any particular highly-placed person to throw open his house to those with whom his ordinary walks of life do not lead him to associate. But it is always to the advantage of society at large that there should be a common meeting ground. There are happily many such meeting grounds.

But it is not only between class and class that the difficulties of sociability lie. Going lower in the social scale, we find acquaintanceships and friendships easily made, and perhaps as easily unmade. In more circumspect circles a man must possess something more than his personality before he is admitted to familiarity. It is like crossing the Russian frontier—one must have a passport duly attested before one is admitted. Some adopt a freer hospitality, and admit practically every stranger that knocks at their gates. They accept a man by his face, and do not think of staying to ask for his history before taking his hand. No doubt their confidence is sometimes abused, and they find themselves burdened with an undesirable companion. But the average man is an honest man, and there is always the weapon of ostracism—adopted quite as much at the bottom of the tree as at the top—to be finally resorted to.

The wealthier classes are far more suspicious. They incline to distrust man in the aggregate, and, moreover, they want to examine a stranger's hand before grasping it, to see that it is not soiled by some occupations that their code taboos. They will not trust themselves to make a free choice of friends, but appeal, as it were, to those who are on the roll of the social-elect, to see if they will sanction the new acquaintance. Their sociability is well defined and closely limited; and they miss half the pleasure gained by those who rove hither and thither, making friends and acquaintances where they will, and regarding no one as too wide of the mark to possess the possibilities of interesting occasional companionship.

It is not that the poor are intuitively more sociable than the rich, but that the quality in the rich is more hedged about by convention, by etiquette, and the unwritten laws of caste. Both for their own sake and for the sake of others many members of the upper classes would often like to have more freedom in their companionships. They have however to look at their life all round, and they discover that the law which sets them on a pedestal demands many sacrifices. Exclusiveness is not so much their pleasure as their protection—the attitude which keeps them on the pedestal. Expediency must temper sociability to some extent everywhere; but, while the expediency of the aristocrat is narrow, that of the artisan is so wide that its boundaries are difficult to see.

The true soul of sociability is to stand in such relation to the society in which one finds oneself that—for the time being, at any rate—there may be a feeling of equality, or that the feeling of inequality may not be awakened. Interests are so wide and varied they must chop up society into sections to a large degree; but outside the predominant interests of each man there should be a sense of life in common with all the race. By cultivating this broad sociability we give pleasure to others and reap an abundant satisfaction from the widening of our lives.

The sociable man is generally either amiable or has a care for little things. The bluff individualist, rejoicing in his individuality, will ask, "Why should I trouble myself to be gracious or entertaining when all I want is to be left alone and not be bored?" If it suits his whim to be silent, he will be silent, no matter who is made uncomfortable. He has a contempt for the niceties of conduct so far as his own actions are concerned. The bluff individualist is by these habits of thought placed among the most unsocial of men. If he saw the part which the predilections of others ought to play in his life, he would realize that the swagger of his own individuality is a much meaner thing than the amiable man's desire to please and be sociable which he affects to despise.

The stern, grand, lonely men, who fight their own battle, stand in their own strength, and compel human homage, have always extorted the loudest chorus of admiration; but there is a constant mercy in our midst for which we should give more frequent thanks; it is with us in the form of the amiable and accommodating men and women who give life its hourly smoothness, who entice us out of our gloom by their sunniness of spirit, who lubricate the creaking wheels of duty with their "oil of gladness"—the sociable men and women who bring us into the circle of our fellows and insist on treating life more as a round game than as a solitary task. Among the virtues sociability deserves a better rating than its modesty commands.

DR. ELSON advances the theory that there is a scientific aspect in the habit of nagging. "Perfect health," he says, "has, as one of its factors, content of mind. A nervous man or woman who is anxious, discontented, gloomy, dissatisfied, worried from any cause, cannot enjoy good health. This mental turmoil produces as one of its primary effects on the body an inability to digest food properly. The blood which should supply the force necessary for the function of digestion is continually drawn away from the stomach by the excitement in the brain, and the woman who nags suffers. While there be those whose tendency to lay on fat is so great that nothing will stop it, a nagging man or woman is generally thin. Their habit of mind has partially starved their bodies."

THERE is something appalling in the thought of the vast increase of fears on the earth as the race progresses—the anxiety of parents, of rulers, of the custodians of treasure, of the owners of paintings and costly treasures, the shudder of the possessor of piled-up investments at every little social outcry, the moral apprehension of the good who realize the growing evils of the times. What a trembling goes round the world with the fall of night—what worry and pang of dread as man's being ripens, and he can be more hurt or destroyed!

BY the instrumentality of literature the mind may roam in search of nourishment over the whole world, while stern duty chains the jaded body to the mechanical duties of the home routine. Unfortunately however it is the tendency of the former to linger behind in company with the latter. Without frequent friction with the outside world, both the outward and the inward polish of an individual grow dull.

THERE is nothing so exacting in its demands nor so serious in its obligations as perfect freedom. It has a joy of its own, but not of the giddy and careless kind. There are continual choices to be made, decisions to form, undertakings to accept or refuse, actions to perform or leave undone, all fraught with consequences more or less important and far-reaching. Wherever authority is absent, responsibility is present, and in the same proportion.

THOSE who have enough individuality to think earnestly and deeply for themselves find in that very exercise a happiness that is all their own. They may share it with others and it may be heightened by sympathy, but it cannot be taken away. It opens a refuge from many troubles and helps one to bear many burdens.

TO-DAY is never as yesterday; we ourselves change. How can our works and thoughts, if they are always to be the fittest, continue always the same? Change indeed is painful yet ever needful; and, if memory has its force and worth, so also has hope.

LIFE is so short that but little can be accomplished without a careful husbandry of what there is of it. Two hours in the morning and two in the evening devoted daily to study will make a wide difference in a single season.

TRUTH cannot die; it passes from mind to mind, imparting light in its progress, and constantly renewing its own brightness during the diffusion.

EVERY sorrow which adds a single virtue to our character is worth enduring, and every pleasure which fails to do this is wasted.

Correspondence.

PERPLEXED.—"Fiasco" means a bottle or flask. When the Italian glassblowers detected flaws in the vase they were blowing they made an ordinary bottle of the failure, and hence the name.

E. H.—The "Monroe" doctrine is this, that the United States of America will not allow any European Power to colonise or conquer any portion of the American continent, or, "To establish a controlling influence over the interests or destiny of any government of this continent."

ARIADNE.—St. Veronica grew out of the handkerchief presented to Our Lord on his way to Calvary, upon which he wiped his hot and bleeding brow. They who made the legend say that the handkerchief took an impress of the Divine face. Hence, Saint Veronica, now exalted into a beautiful lady, is painted with a mask in her hand.

A. Z.—Although the impression is very wide-spread that a human body is heavier after than before death, there s no ground for the belief, which probably originated from the fact that even the weakest living person clings, in some degree, to anyone who attempts to carry him, and so is more easily borne than a corpse.

INTERESTED.—The contemporary Agnostic believes in nothing that cannot be demonstrated. He does not go the length of affirming a negative, but regards the unknown as unknowable, and, if not altogether non-existent, unimportant. Agnosticism in the modern sense cannot be defined as a system of belief, but rather one of formulated unbelief.

CHAT.—The term, Jager, huntsman, is applied in Germany to the armed servants, who ride out with their masters, or sit beside the coachman on the box, as you may have seen when looking at the carriage of a foreign ambassador, and is equivalent to a carriage footman. The Rifles are also called Jager, and the costume of these German armed servants, the green hunting-dress, is the original type of the rifle uniform. It is every way equivalent to the French word, Chasseur.

EXAUDIO.—Objective and subjective are two terms opposed to each other. The first is applied to things separate from the mind and considered as the objects. The second, to the internal states and feelings of the mind, its subjects. One paints things from without; the other, from within. Subjective truth is that which is verified by consciousness; objective truth, or reality, that which results from the nature of things. To do good is pleasant (subjective). An apple is round (objective).

B. L. G.—Buildings may be made safe by properly-fixed lightning-conductors; but some so-called conductors are a source of danger, as they attract the lightning but do not pass it along to the earth; they become therefore lightning accumulators. Lightning-rods should invariably be erected by men who have scientific knowledge. You probably know that a lightning-conductor is not only at work when storms are overhead, but that it often prevents thunder by quietly tapping the electricity in the clouds and conveying it to the earth in a continuous stream.

REGIE.—Pardon us if we say that your talk about a girl-friend is sad folly. Just ask yourself why any girl should become so completely absorbed in her devotion to you. Is it natural? Is it reasonable? Your desire is as unreal as crying for the moon would be. If you are sweet, sincere, and unselfish, you are perfectly certain to find plenty of friends, they will come to you because they can admire and trust you. But it would be selfish of you to wish to monopolise all the thoughts and affections of any one of them; you ought not to wish it; and, if you do wish it, you will not get what you wish, but will find yourself disappointed in your extravagant demand. It is the habit of some girls to gush over each other, as you would like to be gushed over; but there is a large element of sentimental nonsense in the process. Try to think about yourself and your friends truthfully and reasonably. The most satisfying trust of those around us does not show itself in the form of outpourings of jealous sentiment. Now is your time to be happy and contented while you have youth, leisure, and freedom.

A. B.—We would not have it taken as an argument for cruelty but the whole of this question has been often debated, and now all men seem to fairly believe that the lower the organization, the less acute the pain; that is, that pain depends upon high organization and irritability of nerve. So far as we can judge by analogy, the beetle has little or no pain. He will live for days with a pin through him; so we can stick a pin through our dead and cold scarf skin, or through a muscle denuded of skin, without pain. A jelly fish probably does not feel pain, for pain with man is a warning and an aid which that fish does not need. A lobster will hold on to a thing till it pulls its own leg off. A wasp cut in half, while eating a fly, still maintains its hold, and eats on for ten minutes with only its body and wings, its abdomen and sting separated from it. These hints—there are a thousand other facts—will perhaps prove that, in all probability, the very lowest animals feel little or no pain; and that supposition would be quite consistent with the known mercy and kindness of a Creator, who is perfect in all His works.

HARVEST-TIME.

BY S. K. C.

The seeds of spring have passed to summer flowers;
The flowers of summer into autumn fruit;
Heavily hang the golden-freighted bowers;
The meads bend low beneath Love's lingering foot.
The Lord is love; and lo! His foot is here;
His ways are secret, like the hidden seed:
But lo! in perfect flower and ripened ear,
We know His ways are ways of Love indeed!
It was His smile that gave the sunshine birth,
The shadow was the brooding of His wing:
And lo! from sun and shade, the teeming earth,
Ripened by Him for man's rich harvesting!
Open the wide-leaved blossoms of your truth,
God planted seeds of immortality!
Death cannot crush you with his cruel foot;
But, sheltered by the shadow of His wing,
The seed shall pass to flower, and flower to fruit,
Ripened by Death for God's grand harvesting!

Died in Harness.

BY B. F.

"YOU may live ten, twenty, thirty years yet—with care. But any sudden shock, any excessive exertion, will be the death of you."

The man—he was a young man, as years go, two or three and thirty—halted in the street outside the doctor's house, and glanced back, with an odd, calm intenseness of look and attitude, at the dull, wire-blinded windows, behind which the words had been spoken.

What was it the doctor had said? He pressed his hand to his forehead and repeated the brief, curt, briskly-spoken phrases over and over again to himself; at first with nothing beyond the vague dull iteration of a man seeking to impress upon his memory something that he would not let slip; then with a sudden eager consciousness that the point in question was his own affair, intimately connected with himself, bound up with his very life; finally, with an ever increasing sense of wild, intoxicating delight.

Delight, nothing less. For the man was one of those to whom the thought of a long-deferred, slow, possibly lingering death is nothing short of unremitting torture.

It had been always so with him. Since the earliest days of his recollections, from the time that he, a boy of ten, had lain on the rug before the library fire in his father's house, intent on Kingsley's noblest romance, when the words, "a straw death, a cow's death," had first made their meaning clear to him, the thought of a long delayed, lingering death had been his dread.

Later, when the library and all implied thereby had vanished into the far-reaching vistas of the past; had gone only to form part of that phantom gallery of shadowy recollections which memory stores up for every one of us, and from which, now and again, she lifts the dust-covered draperies of the shrouding years to bring to our wondering, scarce recognizing eyes one glimpse of the long ago, it had been just the same.

That haunting thought of the failing faculties of body and mind, the dread of seeing himself passed and distanced in the race, compelled to quit the busy, thronged highway for the lonely seclusion of some retreat to lie down and die in, had grown upon him; and as week by week, day by day, he slipped lower down the social ladder and, wearied and weakened by the world's incessant buffeting, felt his yielding fingers loosen their grip perceptibly; bringing him nearer and nearer to the hideous, hopeless slough at his feet, the idea of a lonely refuge, of an end without hope or cheer, had increased to a veritable waking nightmare.

He was one of those on whom the increasing pessimisms of these last decades had laid an irresistible grasp. In him there was no vestige of the bright, confident optimism which sees in evil only the matrix of the good, the dross which must be burnt away to bring to sight and leave visible the pure and precious gold.

The sin and the suffering, the terror and pain, and the intense pathos of life, were alike terrible to him.

He could not see, and had not faith enough to believe in any end which could be served thereby—only the thought, then an almost certainty, of failing and failing some day, near or distant, of falling in the track and feeling the wild, mad rush of the eager crowd sweep over him in the breathless race for wealth and fame, had grown to be part of his life.

And now that dread was past, that terror removed. Come soon or come late the end itself would be short, of that he was certain.

Life had not showed itself to be such a flower-besprinkled pathway as to put beyond question the possibility of a sudden shock coming to him; and he turned away from the doctor's house a doomed, yet thankful man, the words that would have struck cold terror to the hearts of most men bringing only joy to his.

He turned away out of the less noisy street to find himself in the very centre of the seething whirlpool of life.

A few paces distant, across the crowded thoroughfare, a small crowd caught his attention. The incident causing it was no uncommon one, only a horse down in the shafts of a hansom.

But when the harness had been slackened, and the bystanders, drawing back, had cleared a space to allow the prostrate brute to rise, the inducements of word and whip alike failed to produce effort or movement, and a murmur of astonishment went round among the onlookers.

The horse was dead. There he lay in the sunlight, stark and gaunt, the glazing eye turned up to the blue heaven, the breeze ruffling the glossy mane, but dead, dead, dead!

Even the careless onlookers, rendered callous by the frequent occurrence of accidents of this nature, were touched by the somewhat uncommon ending to the one before them.

"Hang me if I know'd there was anything amiss wi' 'im," Despard heard the driver say with that peculiar resentful intonation by which some natures are wont to express their railings against fate.

"Took his feed like a Christian, he did, this very mornin'. Two hundred the boss give for him three months come Monday, and he was the best 'oss in the lot. An' what's he wuth now? Cat's meat!"

He gave the carcass a half-contemptuous, half-pitying kick as he spoke.

"Died in harness, he has, poor brute, at any rate," Despard heard another man say, who seemed capable of recognizing and looking at the secondary aspect of things.

"Ah, just so. Wery fine for you to talk, as ain't got to make your living by 'im," retorted the driver viciously.

"Dying in 'arness may sound wery well, but it's live brutes we wants here, not dead uns. Them's the ones for our money. Nice job for me to 'ave to tell the boss as the Doctor's dropped a dead crop in the shafts, ain't it? Died in 'arness! Garn!" he wound up with a snarl.

Despard turned and walked away. But the words he had heard haunted him; somehow he could not get them out of his head.

"Died in harness," he muttered to himself. "It's the best death after all. Well, I've neither asked nor received a great deal in life, and this one thing may be granted me, who knows? May a death in harness be the one for me!"

A man is made or marred by the woman he marries, so runs the saying, and the former had been the case with Paul Despard.

It would almost have seemed that Fate had in a sense relented, had decreed that since his days were in a way numbered, they should at all events glide away in peace, that before the eventide it should be light.

Things had become easier for him of late; the billows of life had ceased to give him such rude buffets, he had got into smoother water, and, like every other mortal at least once in this world, he had known what it was to be happy.

As a lover, he had learned what joy meant; happiness, when he found himself a husband; but the meaning of blessedness never came to him until he knew he was a father, and realized that the frail, helpless infant in his wife's arms was a possession which every law of God and man alike declared to belong to these two of them alone.

There was something to live for now; something to think and work for with every waking morning; to rejoice over with thankful gratitude every happy evening.

Life was no longer a great empty void, nor the world a waste, tenanted by malignant beings, all conspiring to work him mischief, since these two had come into it; and the old haunting dread found little standing ground now. Yet the prayer had been heard and registered.

One night, a stormy evening at the close of November, Despard was on his way home. He had fully a mile to walk from the outskirts of the town before the welcoming light of his little cottage shone out suddenly as he rounded the angle of the hill, beyond which, not a quarter of a mile distant, the railway embankment broke the formerly level line of the horizon.

It had been an unsightly object once, this embankment, an ugly upheaval of debris, of scattered fragments in the midst of the fair and smiling landscape, but less so now, for Nature is long-suffering, and speedily flings a veil of tenderest green over the unsightly scars with which her ungrateful children so often repay her bounties to themselves.

He walked as briskly as the wind would let him, whistling cheerily to himself, for his thoughts were bright ones.

Those who remembered seeing and speaking to him that night testified later that they had never seen him in better spirits, and his buoyant "Good night" as he left the office lived long afterwards in the memory of the doorkeeper.

"Puir lad, I doot he was tey," the old Scot would add, with a shake of the head, when recalling to interested listeners the incidents of that never to-be-forgotten night.

Ere long Despard had left the town behind, and entered the more open country. He loved fresh air and freedom, and willingly accepted the long walk backwards and forwards to his work, for the sake of the sense of space and the pure breath of the rushing wind round his cottage home.

There was wind enough abroad to-night. Even in the town slates and chimney-pots had been unceremoniously dislodged, and hoardings that had stood the stress of last winter's storms had succumbed at last. Out in the country, with little available protection, and no shelter of any kind, things were even worse.

Hard work struggling along in the teeth of the gale, with what sounded like the strife of the powers of the air raging in the tormented tree-tops above him, as with bent head and shoulders bowed before the storm, he forced his way toward his home.

Dangerous work, too, for the oaks were yet heavy with leaves, and offered resistance to the progress of the storm, to their own destruction.

"Ah!" He stopped dead, with a sudden tightening of the breath. Half a dozen steps in the rear a huge tree, torn by the roots from its stronghold, had gone crashing eastwards, and the force of the concussion had well-nigh deafened him.

"A near shave for me," muttered Paul, with a quick-drawn breath of thankful relief, as he braced himself once more to force his way forward.

Ahead of him lay the village, distant a mile or so beyond the spot he was approaching, a deep gully parting two opposing shoulders of high ground and spanned by the piles of an antiquated wooden viaduct.

One might have fancied that some huge unknown monster, beside which the most gigantic reptile belonging to prehistoric periods would have appeared dwarfed a thousand times, had chosen that lonely deserted spot between the two opposing hills for a grave, and that the carcass, slowly decaying, had left the enormous backbone alone visible in the shape of the gigantic skeleton fabric spanning the valley between.

"The old bridge will feel the strain to-night," thought Despard, and he was right.

Confined in the narrow gully between the challenging outposts of rock the wind swept to meet him with the force of a hurricane.

It fairly lifted him once, it drove him back again and again, and flew past him shrieking in triumph in his tingling ears; but that was all. Physically, man may be at the mercy of wind and wave, yet he makes them in their turn the puppets of his will.

"There goes another tree," muttered Paul, as a crash that shook the ground sounded again in his ears.

Was it a tree, though? No, surely. No tree of any size grew in such close proximity to the viaduct. He knew what it must be, as, even before the hideous tumult had died into silence, he turned his eager face up to the huge fabric above, and saw the fatal yawning gap visible in its level length.

How the wind-demon shrieked and exulted in a tumult of ecstasy as he swept again and again in triumphant joy through the hideous and gaping rent, screaming in shrill unholy glee at the prospect of a swift and sure revenge on the mortals who had dared to oppose a barrier like that in the path of his former unchecked triumphs.

"Revenge! revenge!" shrieked the Wind Spirit, tearing frantically at the piles of the still standing piers. "Ha! ha! it is close at hand, it is coming nearer. A hundred lives are mine to-night."

"Are they?" Paul Despard said between his teeth, answering the quick succession of thoughts flashing through his brain. "Not this time!"

A hard struggle, and for him a terrible strain, wrestling with the storm, fighting against it in the endeavor to climb the steep embankment and reach the outlying signal box that stood barely a stone's throw from the viaduct.

He was gasping when he reached it, guided by the light which streamed out in a ruddy flare to meet him. It flickered and wavered strangely to-night, surely. But the rush of the wind would account for that.

"Parsons!" he shouted with all the breath he had left, but Parsons evidently did not hear. No wonder, in that deafening tumult; and Despard sprang at the door. It yielded to his wrench, flew open, and he stood in the signal box.

In mercy's name! had the powers of the air been given their own way to-night? On the floor lay the signalman, unconscious, the boards stained with the blood that had oozed from a ghastly cut on his head, the flaring light of the lamps shining on the glass bestrewing the floor from the broken casement, which, blown in by the violence of the gale, in itself offered all the explanation that was needed.

Despard looked, understood, and his lips tightened curiously as he stepped forward and bent down over the helpless man on the floor of the cabin. He had his choice given him in that moment, and he knew it. Life and love on the one hand—on the other, duty and death.

Yet it must have been a bitter struggle for him! The duty of the man, and the instinct of the husband and father, waged sore battle within him then.

So little time was left, too; the lives of a hundred passengers in the night express hung on the exertions of the next few minutes, and telegraph and signals alike were as a sealed book to him. Yet he did not remain intact.

The signalman declared afterwards that a faint recollection of a voice shouting in his ear, in a frantic endeavor to reach and rouse the slumbering consciousness had come to him; and the signs left around bore their silent witness to the desperate attempts made by Despard to restore the man's senses, before, desisting from his fruitless endeavors, he stood up to realize that the task and the responsibility had come upon himself alone. Pity that but a broken reed held in its keeping the issues of life and death!

He had his battle to fight over again, even in spite of the stern resolve he had taken to his heart. However loud and clear may be the trumpet call of duty, there are a hundred mocking echoes ever ready to blend its tones with theirs, and to every man is not given the perfect attunation of ear to distinguish the unfaltering between the false and the true.

"Who is to blame or judge you?" whispered a tempting voice in his ear. "The bridge was standing when you passed it questioned, you have only to say that, and who is to doubt your word, or to be in any way one whit the wiser? Remember what the doctor told you, and don't be a fool. Go home to your wife and child, hold your tongue, and let the night express look out for itself."

And to that the brave gallant heart of the man, rising up in indignant protest, made answer: "No! The lives of these passengers have been given into my hand, and with God's help I'll fulfill the trust."

Did a vision of the face of his young wife, listening in anxious expectation for the step of the husband on whom, living, she had looked her last, for the voice which should never more sound in her ears, rise up before him then?

For one brief moment he looked wistfully back, on life and love and happiness, and then between himself and the blissful vision rushed the shadowy form of the night express, with its scores of unconscious passengers, thundering on through the inky darkness of that night of storm, to the fate awaiting it at the Romney Bridge.

With a white, set face, but an unfaltering step, he crossed to the door, flung it open, descended the steps, and sprang out upon the line, sending his heart in one brief fervent prayer upwards before he braced himself to the task, which, bringing life and safety to others, could bring to him one thing only—death.

We scoff at faith in these days, faith in man at least, and some of us at faith in any Higher power. Yet we all have it, every one: we prove that every night we lie down to rest, each day that we go forth to take our part in the world's work.

Despard was man enough to have faith in men; and he gave his wife and child in charge to those whose lives and credit he knew he was giving his own life to save, as, calling on every energy of mind and body to stand by him now, he nerved himself to the fatal work, and sped with flying footsteps along the line.

And right nobly was the trust responded to, as the widow and child, amply provided for by a grateful company, could tell in after days. Nay, more, the solid structure of brick and stone which, in twenty shapely arches, now spans the gully between the sister hills, will go down to history by the name of—no longer the Romney—but the Despard Bridge.

Half a mile, at the very least, and barely seven minutes to do it in! And all the time with the demon wind clutching at him, driving him back, tearing the breath from the pallid lips, shrieking in his ears in shrill-voiced, despairing fury, as if recognizing its own impotence before the will of a determined man. Could he trust himself to carry the work through?

Would the panting, straining heart, already taxed to its utmost, hold out long enough to enable him to reach the spot, somewhere beyond the darkness hanging over the bars of parallel steel that stretched like white serpents away ahead of him, where, a quarter of a mile outside the station, the next signal box stood?

The lurid light at last flashed out across the line! To shout against the wind would have been useless, even had he not needed all his breath, had not every energy been strained to its utmost in the desperate effort to stave off the grip of the resistless fingers that he could feel already clutching at his heart.

Yet, if will power, the stern determination of a resolute purpose could keep death at bay till the work was done, it should do it now!

"God! let it not be all in vain," gasped Despard as, nerving himself for one last effort, he sprang up the steps of the signal box.

The roar of the wind had drowned all sound of approaching footsteps, and the signalman started and stared at the sudden apparition of a wild storm-tossed figure, with ghastly haggard face and strained starting eyes.

"The express! Stop her! Romney Bridge down!"

They were all the words the blue trembling lips could falter out, and the speaker staggered as he spoke and leant heavily against the wall.

Far in the distance, even through the roar of the wind, could be heard the low dull thunder of the approaching train. "Line clear!" had been the last signal from the Romney box; and passing swiftly through the station and leaving its lights behind her, in complete unconsciousness of the waiting grave yawning a mile beyond, the express got her steam up and gathered speed again for her swift race to the north.

Nearer and nearer . . . and then the red danger signal flashing out into the darkness, sends a quivering shock pulsating along the great throbbing line of life; and the passengers, roused and startled by the sudden and unlooked for slowing, begin to wonder and to question at its cause.

"We oughtn't to stop here, Jack, ought we?" asked the golden-haired bride of the honeymoon couple in the car next the engine, with that complete confidence in the omniscience of the young husband beside her, characteristic of the wife of twenty-four hours.

Ay, stroke the golden hair, and smile, as you tell her it is all right. You little know how those eyes, now that face, which is all the world to you now, might have looked only one short quarter of an hour hence.

And next day, when the news comes to you, and you know the truth, think, as you are a man, of yon weeping widow in the lonely cottage by the ruined bridge, to whom the redemption of your love and happiness has brought only tears and sorrow and the grim, dark shadow of death.

A smile, such as must have shown on the face of the Theban hero, gazing down from the height of Mantinea, where he lay with the death agonies on him, at the flying Spartans below—on that of Von Winkelried, had he been permitted to witness the wedge like cleaving of the phalanx in which he himself had made the first rift—hovered on Despard's lips as he listened to the well-known sound, and knew that the express was slackening speed—the smile of a man who has seen his work, and to whom it has been given to know that it has been well done. Let the end come now—he had played his part.

"Jim," he said distinctly, but with a strange unearthly ring in his voice. "I've dealt fair by the Co.—tell the Co. to deal fair by me. My—my wife . . ."

But when the signalman, wondering at the sudden silence, looked round to answer him, no answer was needed. Of the two beneath the roof of that signal box, one alone was a living man. Paul Despair had had his wish. He had died in harness.

A Night in Paris.

BY F. W. W.

IT was on my twentieth birthday, January 18th, now several years ago, that I was married. All the twenty years of my life had been passed in a quiet country Rectory, varied only by a rare visit to cousins at Reading, or by a still rarer one to the city; and it was while staying in the metropolis that I met my husband, a young Australian. Our engagement was a short one, and immediately after the wedding we started off on a tour through Italy.

I was such a home bird that, parting with all my old associations was a sore trial, though I knew it was only for a few months, for we were to return to spend the summer with my people before leaving for Australia in the autumn.

The last farewells were said with many tears; it was heart-breaking to have to leave all the little ones, all the old people in the cottages, whom I had visited week by week—to part for ever with my Sunday-school class, to play for the last time on the organ which had been the joy and pride of my heart; and, if Robert had not been one of the best tempered men, he would have become disgusted with me.

When we had really left home behind us however, my spirits revived; the change of scene was delightful after so quiet a life. My honeymoon was a most happy one, my husband was devoted to me, and, I believed, loved me as deeply as I loved him.

Still it was with a thrill of pleasure that I heard from him that he had received a letter summoning him back on important business some weeks sooner than we had anticipated. He was greatly disappointed, for Rome was still unvisited—and he had been most anxious to see it thoroughly, and also to pass a few days in Paris, which had always been the ambition of my life.

"Never mind, Trixy," said Bob; "if we do have to give up Rome, we will see something of Paris."

We were then staying at Florence, and, after much discussion, we decided that we would contrive to visit both cities, if only for a day or two. I was a capital traveler, was never tired, and able to sleep in a railway car as well as if on the softest bed; and, as for Bob, he was never so happy as when we were rushing from place to place; so neither of us feared the extra journeying.

When we reached Rome, we found it impossible to tear ourselves away from it, there was so much to be seen; and so there we loitered, rejoicing in all the past glories of that most glorious of all Italian cities, till a telegram from Robert's London lawyer, urging his return, once more hastened our departure.

For the first part of our journey Robert was engrossed in his Bradshaw, always a source of great perplexity to both of us. To me this home journey was delightful, and, leaving Bob to his book, I amused myself with picturing what delight my letter announcing our return would bring to the dear old home—how mother would busy herself in arranging the spare room, how the children would be wandering off to see if the Lent lilies were out in the long meadows, and, if so, how they would fill the big baskets with their golden treasures, and carry them home to deck the house within in order to welcome us.

I could imagine my father requesting the schoolmistress—who was now organist—to choose my favorite hymns and chants; and I knew that during the evening service I should hear the hymn we all loved best, "A Day's March Nearer Home."

"Trixy," said Bob, suddenly breaking in upon my happy dreams, "come over here! See—we shall arrive at Turin at 8.45, sleep there, and go on to Paris the following morning. After our arrival we will take the luggage straight off to the Northern, and can spend the whole day sight-seeing, leaving by the night-mail."

I did my best to follow his finger as he pointed out the figures in the closely-printed columns, and obediently nodded my head as he read them out to me.

At that moment the train reached a station, and the car, which we had had almost to ourselves, was quickly filled, a priest taking the corner I had vacated when I crossed over to study the "mystery of mysteries" with Bob.

This man at once held up my purse and handkerchief, which, as usual, I had left behind me. Bob frequently declared that, whenever I left the table at hotel or restaurant, the waiters always had to run after me with my purse.

After thanking the priest, Bob took it and laughingly put it into his pocket, saying that I should have no further use for it on my journey, otherwise it was sure to be left behind when we changed carriages.

We journeyed on without meeting with any adventures, and in due time found ourselves in Paris. It was a day never to be forgotten.

To see the places I had longed to see all my life was an unbounded delight; but what pleased me most of all was a visit to the Palais-Royal, where I spent some time in choosing presents for the children and for my old village-friends at home.

The next day passed only too quickly; and now all that remained was for us to have dinner and then journey onwards once more. Yes, in another twenty four hours we should be at home—at home in the dear old Rectory; I should feel once more the loving kisses of father, of mother, and of the darling little brothers and sisters whom I had nursed and taught till only a short time before.

Oh, the joy of turning to mother, and of telling her of my happiness, of the goodness of my husband, and of letting her know that the stranger I knew she had mistrusted because he was a stranger had proved to be one of the kindest men that ever lived!

We turned into a restaurant off the Palais Royal; and if I live to be a hundred years old, I shall never forget the slightest detail of those rooms. The walls, gaily decorated with alternate panels of paintings and mirrors, the many tables with their snowy cloths and shining silver are ever before me.

At the table next to ours was a family party, consisting of a mother, father, and two children—such spoiled, over-indulged, over-dressed children, yet whom, for the sake of the little ones who were waiting for me, I watched with tenderness and loving interest.

Our dinner was ended at last and our bill paid.

"It is terribly cold to-night, Trix," said Bob; "you had better have some hot coffee the last thing before starting. While you are drinking it I will go and find a carriage."

He ordered my coffee, and then I watched him, my tall, handsome, loving young husband go through the swing-door into the brilliantly-lighted street, beyond. I sipped my very hot coffee, fearing I should not have finished it before he was back.

My cup was emptied very slowly, I knew, and Bob had not returned. Newcomers began to arrive, and I felt that more than one rude stare was given to me, a young English girl sitting alone in these now crowded rooms. I would not let myself grow nervous. Bob was anxious, I thought, to find a good horse, to enable me to drive quickly from the warm room to the station, he had found he had more time than he had imagined, and perhaps—his was such a generous nature!—was choosing me yet another present in remembrance of our visit to Paris. But, oh, I did wish he would hasten back!

Monsieur, madame and their little ones at the next table had finished their repast. Monsieur's cigarette was smoked out—the children were getting restless—they rose, and I watched them wrapping themselves up in coats and furs; and, amidst much laughter and talking and bowing of waiters, they too passed out of the swinging doors. And yet Bob did not come.

The door once more swung open, and a party of three gentlemen entered. They took their seats at the table lately occupied by the family party. Frenchmen are always so polite, I had always heard; so I supposed it was the fact of a girl sitting dining alone that made them for once forget their politeness, for, although I could not understand their words, their looks and actions plainly showed that I was the object at which their wit and laughter were directed.

Oh, why did not Bob come? Where could he be? I tried to hide my face and its blushes from the gaze of the mocking trio at my side, to find excuses for Bob's delay, to still the beatings of my heart, to keep back the tears from my eyes.

Suddenly a clock behind me—I had noticed it before—struck. I knew that it was an hour since Bob had left me. The clock must be fast! What could have happened to him? What could I do? Go in search of him! But where? And, if I left the restaurant and he returned and found me gone, we might wander about the whole night long and never meet.

Then I became aware that the waiters, in a group, were talking to a fresh arrival, and that all their looks were directed towards me. This gentleman, whom I afterwards discovered was the manager, soon approached me, and began a long discourse in French, of which I could distinguish only the words "madame" and "monsieur."

Of course, in the schoolroom at the Rectory, we had gone through the whole course of French verbs and exercises; but our governess, a kind and most conscientious English lady, had never been away from home, so did not pretend to teach conversational French.

And now the very little French I could have spoken in England had all fled from me, and Italian, the language to which I had been accustomed all these past weeks, came to my lips; when I tried to explain, I could not understand the manager.

He pointed at my empty coffee cup; and I understood him then, and, putting my hand into my pocket, remembered for the first time that Bob had not returned my purse after taking it from the priest in the train.

No one could realize what I felt at that moment! Here was a young girl, whose life had been spent in an obscure country village till a few weeks before, alone in a foreign land, penniless and friendless, her whole soul filled with alarm at what might have befallen her husband, and yet, in spite of overwhelming anxiety, conscious that she was affording amusement to a roomful of men and women!

The manager, finding we could come to no understanding, turned to the crowd now assembled around us, and inquired, as well as I could understand him, if any one present could speak English. This called forth much laughter among the young men, but but no one came forward.

Presently a waiter approached the manager, and after a few words together, he left the room, returning in a short time with another waiter, who, amid much applause from the lookers-on, informed me in very indifferent English that he could speak the language. Would madame be so good as to explain to him for whom she had been waiting so long?

In spite of my terrible anxiety and fear, my pride came to my assistance, and I answered as firmly as I could:

"Before I make any explanations, I insist on these gentlemen retiring to their own tables; it cannot interest them to hear what I have to say. It is sufficient for them to know that I am an English lady at present in great distress."

Something in my voice or manner seemed to quiet their merriment, and before my interpreter had begun his translation, several turned away, and ere he had finished, most had gone.

The manager then invited me into a private room; but I declined the invitation, fearing that Bob might return and find me gone. I explained everything to him through my interpreter the waiter, and entreated him at once to make every inquiry outside.

Then came another half-hour of miserable wretched waiting. I sat with my face hidden in my hand, to shield it from the inquisitive glances of the passers-by, till the manager again came to me, with the English-speaking Jacques as interpreter. They could obtain no news; no English gentleman who had met with an accident had been taken to any of the hospitals that evening, nor

had any one witnessed any description of street casualty.

It was maddening. Sometimes I thought I was dreaming, and it was with difficulty I could refrain from calling aloud for Bob to come to me. Still I refused to leave my seat, faint and overpowered as I felt from the fumes of tobacco and cooking.

Once or twice a woman came to me and, through the friendly Jacques, offered me shelter in her house; but all the dreadful stories of the wickedness of Paris life that I had ever heard recurred to me, and I refused.

Hour after hour passed, and gradually the rooms became deserted; and then the manager told me I must leave, as closing-time had come. He, alas, was a bachelor, and could not invite madame to his home; but his head-waiter, whom he had known for years, had a wife and home close by, and he and she were now waiting to conduct madame to their house. When the morning came, he trusted madame would have tidings of monsieur. He was indeed very kind!

Oh, that terrible walk through the back streets of Paris! Leaving the restaurant was giving up the last vestige of hope that all would be well; and I hardly know how I dragged my feet through street after street.

Then a nervous horror overtook me as to whether my conductors were playing me false. The manager had spoken of their house being near, and we had gone up turning after turning.

At last we stopped before the door of a high, dark house in a narrow, deserted street, our footsteps echoing as we ascended the steep stone steps. The houses on each side were high and dark. Here and there a lighted window was to be seen; but, even as we waited while the door was unfastened, some of those became obscured.

We entered into complete darkness, and were guided solely by the unsteady light of a match lighted from time to time by the waiter. We went up a broad flight of stairs—up, up, up till my head reeled and I felt I must fall—then madame, unlocking a door, led me into a large room.

She bustled about, and soon had lighted a small oil lamp, which she placed on a table.

The room was scantily but tastefully furnished; madame was evidently very proud of her salon. She bade me rest in an easy chair while she prepared some chocolate; it distressed her greatly that she was unable to pursuade me to drink it. Then seeing how tired out I was, she led me into the bed chamber, which I know now was the only one she had, also that she and her husband had to sleep in the sitting room.

I could understand a few of her words; and her actions were so expressive that I quickly gathered she was full of compassion for me. I had almost forgotten my fears as to my own fate when I heard sounds of a freen arrival in the next room.

Soon afterwards madame was called away by her husband. Before going, she bade me "Good night," then, clasping her hands together, suddenly gave me a kiss and left me.

My nerves were so overstrung that I was able to hear the voices in the next room quite distinctly. Madame was expostulating, and the new-comer was evidently becoming angry, when monsieur interfered.

Then I heard footsteps cross the passage and stop outside my room; and I could distinguish the hoarse breathing of some one close to my door. I knew that I was being looked at through the key-hole. In another minute or so the person, wherever it was, moved; and then I heard a key placed in the lock, and the grating noise as it turned told me that I was a prisoner in this dark lonesome house.

I moved to the window and peered out into the darkness; but all was silent. I could distinguish the outline of the neighboring houses against the gray sky, and that was all.

There were no signs of light or life, the distant howling of a dog alone breaking the silence. The room which I was in was a large bare one, and placed half across it was a tall black screen.

I was about to satisfy myself that no one was behind it, so nervous had I grown, when my candle, which had been for some time flickering, suddenly went out, and I was left in total darkness.

It has often been said that there is a limit to human misery; and so there is to anxiety and nervous terrors—there must be, or that night I should have gone mad.

Looking back, I can remember nothing that passed from the time my candle died out till the early rays of morning dawned through the window. Whether I fainted or whether I slept I know not; all I remember is lying on the bed, bitterly cold, shivering and feeling that morning had come at last.

Before long the door was softly unlocked, and my hostess crept in on tip-toe, as if fearing to arouse me, bearing in her hand some hot chocolate. Finding me still dressed in all my traveling-wraps, as when she had left me the night before, she showed the greatest distress and dismay.

I gladly drank the hot chocolate, and, hearing that Jacques was outside, I jumped up, and would have gone to him had not madame held me back and called aloud to him to enter. My mind was clearer than it had been the night before, and I could plan a little what to do.

First I asked him to go to the station and inquire if Robert had been there. I gave him his description, and he wrote it down with his name. Then I determined that I would inform the police, and, if, during the day, no tidings of my husband reached me, then, and not till then, I would telegraph home.

Sooner than I had dared to hope, Jacques' voice was heard outside; and I ran to the door, only to find it locked. I screamed to him to come and tell me the result of his inquiries; but he and madame were talking so earnestly together that I could not make myself heard. I knocked and rattled at the lock.

At last I heard them coming: the door opened and I saw that the madame was in tears.

"You have brought me bad news?" I cried. "My husband is ill—is dead?"

"Calm yourself, madame, I entreat," replied Jacques: "I bring you no news of monsieur. No one corresponding to your description of him has been seen."

"Then why this grief of madame's?" I inquired, for her voice was broken with sobs, as all the time she poured out exclamations of sorrow and pity.

"Because, madame," answered Jacques, in his slow hesitating manner—"because I find that, though no one remembers seeing monsieur himself, some one last night claimed the luggage and carried it away. Ah—where?"

"Then my husband is alive and is seeking everywhere for me. Tell madame that; tell her——"

"Alas, madame, I fear you guess the wrong!" replied Jacques, softly; and I saw a tear roll down his cheek. "Oh that madame could understand the French! I have no words in English to tell you gently our fears. Can madame not understand that what has happened is—oh, so many young ladies before have come to her—the monsieur has wearied of madame, and has returned alone to England, to Spain, to Italy?"

I screamed to him to quit; and I bade madame cease weeping. I told Jacques to run without a moment's delay and proclaim throughout Paris where I was.

"I know my husband is seeking for me high and low!" I cried. "Come, madame—come with me back to where he left me, and I will wait there till he appears."

I was preparing to rush off that moment, when madame stopped me, and with many tears, begged Jacques to explain that she had given her word not to let me leave the room till she had leave to do so.

Then I think I did go mad. I was powerless to seek my husband, unable to understand why I was kept a prisoner; all the nervous horrors of the past night came back to me, and, above them all, Jacques's words continually rang in my ears: "Monsieur has wearied of madame!"

What if he were right? What if Bob had grown tired of me? Should I write and tell them at home to come to me? Never, never! Tell mother that her distrust was not unfounded? Why had I remembered her distrust? She had no grounds for it.

"Monsieur has wearied of madame!" Would the sound never cease ringing in my ears? Bob wearied of me! I was so childish, so silly; and yet—and yet I had always thought he loved me!

No, no—it was not true! But what if it were? Must I send for father, go home with him, see mother's weeping face, watch the pitying glances of the villagers, hear mother say, as she had said so often before our marriage, "I wish we had known a little more about him!"

"Monsieur has wearied of madame!" Yes—Jacques was right; I saw it all now. Bob had tired of me, and had bribed the manager to keep me a prisoner till he was far away. Yes—I know that I was mad, for the determination came to me that, as soon as I was free, I would wait about the streets till night, and then seek oblivion in the depths of the dark waters of the Seine, which Bob and I had watched so gaily only on the preceding day.

Hark! The bells of a church near were ringing, calling people to prayer. No, no—they were only saying, "Monsieur has wearied of madame—monsieur has wearied of madame!" I heard steps again upon the stairs, more angry voices outside, madame shrieking above them all.

They were coming closer; they were opening my door. What mattered it to me? The bells went on ringing, "Monsieur has wearied of madame—monsieur has wearied of madame!"

But madame's voice was rousing me. What did she say? Oh, why could I not understand her? But I did understand her, for she said, or her actions did—

"Grieve no longer, my dear—your trouble is ended; an English gentleman awaits you in the salon."

In an instant I rushed past madame into the next room, and there, standing waiting, was—not my husband, not my Bob, but a grave elderly gentleman whom I had never seen before!

It took him not one moment to tell me that Mr. Henson was safe, and that he had come to take me to Bob—for he was in prison, arrested the night before on suspicion of being one of a gang of dynamiters.

It had been impossible for Mr. Henson to communicate with any one till that morning, and he was distracted about me. His luggage had been seized by the police, and it was by their commands I had been placed under lock and key. No news of his arrest was allowed to creep out, as the police hoped to capture others of the gang.

Everything was most satisfactorily explained as soon as Bob had been allowed an interview with the British Consul, who was the kind bearer of these tidings.

There were several formalities to be gone through before Bob was really free; but what mattered that to me? He had not wearied of his "madame," and, when his arms were round me once more and I was clinging to his neck, the past terrors of the night were all over like a hideous dream.

"Well, Trixy," said Bob, as the train was bearing us away, "we certainly did see something of Paris!"

A Matter of Distance.—It is well known that in high altitudes, owing to the rarefied air, objects are visible at a great distance; and from the city of Denver, the Rocky Mountains, although some sixteen miles distant, seem but a very short way off. An English gentleman, a tourist, came in on the Kansas Pacific train one morning, stopped at the Inter-Ocean Hotel in Denver, and soon made the acquaintance of two of the "old citizens."

The Englishman was captivated with the appearance of the mountains, and suggested to the two "old citizens" that, as the mountain range was such a very short distance from the city, they should all take a walk to it, and return in time for dinner. The two "old citizens" saw a chance for some fun, and immediately consented. The trio started west, and walked towards the mountains for about two hours and a half, but the mountains seemed as far away as ever.

The Englishman was a good walker, and kept a little in advance of his friends. Finally they saw him deliberately sit down, as he came to a small irrigating ditch, perhaps two feet wide, and begin taking off his boots and stockings.

When they came up to where he was sitting they asked him, in some surprise, what he was doing that for. The Englishman said he was going to wade the stream.

Both the "old citizens," looking at him in astonishment, asked him why he didn't step across it. "Step across it," replied the Britisher—"step across it! Not I! What do I know about distances in your confounded country?"

If (says a contemporary in a curious computation), there were but one potato in the world, a careful cultivator might produce 10,060,000,000 from it in ten years, and that would supply the world with seed again.

At Home and Abroad.

The Sultan of Morocco uses bicycles as instruments of torture for any of the ladies of his harem who have the misfortune to offend him. The unhappy odaliques are compelled to mount machines and ride around a marked track in the palace gardens. Not knowing how to ride, their repeated falls and other mishaps furnish the Sultan and his more favored wives with endless amusement. When they have fallen twenty times—provided, of course, that they have not broken their necks in the meantime—the punishment is complete, and the bruised beauties are allowed to retire.

Ever since the last earthquakes in Athens, the immediate ruin of the Parthenon has been a foregone conclusion in case another earthquake should occur before certain contemplated repairs are made. Although we have been taught to believe that only the best material was used in constructing the Parthenon, as a matter of fact the builders employed first-class marble on the outside only, where the eye could see it. Faulty stones within, after the building became roofless, invited the destructive work of rain, frost and heat. The rotten blocks are not only a menace to the structure, but a striking testimony to the fact that ancient, like modern, architecture had its illusions.

A curious developement of the woman's franchise system comes from New Zealand. At a late election one of the candidates was charged with being guilty of regular cruelty to his wife, the report being spread by the opposition to set the women voters against him. But the women voters in the electorate showed a commendable desire to act fairly. They formed a select committee, who called upon the candidate's wife and examined her carefully as to her husband's behavior. The result was that he was acquitted of the charge, and at the election he secured nearly all the women's votes, winning the seat easily.

Some students belonging to an Autopsy Society at Chicago have entered into a compact to give their brains to science when they die. Each member will also write a history of his mental processes from the beginning to as near the end of his life as possible, and give a statement of the vices and virtues which have influenced him. Students of anthropology have found much difficulty in obtaining the cerebral tissue of sound-minded persons. The brains of criminals and insane persons are not so difficult to procure, and from them it has been possible to gather data as to what a person's brain should not be. But to learn the appearance of the brain of a normal person has been hard. By examination of the brains of these students with the accompanying written chart it is believed that the manifold shades of character may be identified in their respective parts of the brain.

That beauty, like music, will charm the beasts of savage beasts seems proved by the performances of a young lady who is now filling an engagement at a Berlin variety theatre. An enormous cage on wheels is pushed upon the stage, and the dancer entering it, performs a skirt dance within almost touching distance of three lions. The animals remain perfectly quiet, and beyond an occasional growl they show no resentment at this invasion of their den. To some extent they appear to be terrified, and it is said that part of the performer's dependence for safety is based upon the assumption that the effect of the skirt dance and the music is hypnotic. It would be possible, she thinks, to execute any kind of dance with immunity in similar circumstances. The lions, though small, are young and vigorous, and the plucky lady was a long time before she succeeded in perfecting her performance for public exhibition.

There is more Catarrh in this section of the country than all other diseases put together, and until the last few years was supposed to be incurable. For a great many years doctors pronounced it a local disease, and prescribed local remedies, and by constantly failing to cure with local treatment, pronounced it incurable. Science has proven Catarrh to be a constitutional disease and therefore requires constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, is the only constitutional cure on the market. It is taken internally in doses from 10 drops to a teaspoonful. It acts directly on the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. They offer one hundred dollars for any case it fails to cure. Send for circulars and testimonials. Address

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Our Young Folks.

ON THE SEE-SAW.

BY L. M.

I'VE been smacked by mamma, and shut in the coal-house by cook, and kept without my supper, and I'm the unhappiest kitten in the whole world. It wasn't my fault that Asbestos was hurt, but I have been punished, and Asbestos has been petted, and fed, and treated as grandly as if he were a real Persian, and all because he was stupid, and cried.

I told mamma that it was all the fault of those clumsy children Master Tom and Miss Flora—but she won't hear a word against them, because they give her milk when she creeps up to the schoolroom at tea-time.

But I'll tell you all about it from the beginning, and then you will see how cruelly I have been treated.

Asbestos is my brother; he was called Asbestos because, they say, asbestos is better than coal. I am called Coal. I have to look after Asbestos, because I am older than he is; he is much bigger than I am, but nobody seems to think of that.

Well, this morning I took Asbestos along the garden wall until we reached a nice corner, hot with the sun; then I said, "We'll stay here" and wash ourselves."

Asbestos was obedient for a wonder, and did what he was told, so we sat in the sun, and we had a real good clean. I washed my face until it was really uncomfortably wet, and I rubbed my back well behind my ears, a thing I don't trouble to do every day; and Asbestos washed, too, very well for him.

And then we sat still to dry, and watched Master Tom and Flora playing on the grass. They had a great round thing down there—something like the thing the soldiers were hitting the other day when I looked over the wall. The children called that a drum, and on top of this was a long, thin thing, and the long, thin thing was not at all steady.

The children did not seem to mind that, though, for Master Tom got up on one end of it, and Miss Flora sat on the other, and then it moved up and down. The children laughed as if they were having great fun, but, oh, dear me, children are so stupid.

They were quite happy to bob up and down, and they never saw the best part of it the wonderful dark thing that moved along the grass every time they went up in the air; they never even looked at it, much less tried to catch it. I saw it, though, and pointed it out to Asbestos, and we watched and watched it as carefully as if it had been another robin like the one we only just missed yesterday.

It was while we were watching that say black thing, and I was thinking every moment, "Now I'll spring!" One moment more, and I'll have it!" that Miss Flora looked up and caught sight of us on the wall.

"Tom, Tom!" she cried. "Look at Bestos and Coaly! Aren't they funny?"

Then they slid off their seats, and the say black thing we had been watching suddenly disappeared.

"Puss, puss!" said Miss Flora nasty "come, Coaly darling!"

It was pleasant to be spoken to like that. People generally call Asbestos "Darling," and forget all about me.

I liked Miss Flora for being always such ways, and telling Asbestos to be low, I jumped down off the wall and rubbed myself against Miss Flora's ankles, for I thought her good manners ought to be encouraged, and I wanted, too, to get near the place where that strange creature had been sliding about. I wanted to see where it had hidden. Afterwards I felt sorry that I had trusted to Miss Flora's good manners, for it seemed to me she had no manners at all.

When they had stroked me for a little while, Master Tom, who had Asbestos in his arms, calling him a "beauty" and the "finest kitten in the world," cried out, "Let's make the fun see saw!"

Then I learned that the thing they had been sitting on was called a see-saw, and he began to put Asbestos on the [illegible] I thought that I might have [illegible] I [illegible] and I did not feel very happy.

In a few minutes Miss Flora came running back with a bundle of white things over her arm. And then Asbestos and I suffered terribly. We were squeezed into bodices, our paws were pushed into sleeves, strings were tied tight round our necks and shoulders, long petticoats tripped up our toes, and altogether we were tortured—simply tortured, and I had hard work to remember that Miss Flora had called me her "Coaley darling."

If I had forgotten that, I believe I should have scratched her. Asbestos did scratch Master Tom, but Master Tom did not seem to mind it very much.

When we were really dressed up to look like two Gwendolines, the children carried us over to the see-saw, and were just going to seat us on it, when a voice called from the house, "Tom! Flora! Come quickly and see what papa has brought!" And in a moment Asbestos and I were dropped upon the grass and the children raced off to the house.

Asbestos and I looked at one another, and then we tried to sort out our paws from our petticoats, and I felt awfully silly sitting there like that. I know I felt very angry with the children, but after a minute I remembered the see-saw, and then I thought that we might as well hunt that thing that ran about under it. So I told Asbestos, and we lay down flat and looked everywhere, but we couldn't see it.

Then I said we would get upon the see-saw, as the children did, and see if it would come again and run about on the grass under us. So I sat on the low end, and told Asbestos to climb up on the other.

He said he couldn't, and he made such a fuss that I let him get on the low end and I climbed up on the other. When we were both up we looked over the side, but we couldn't see the black thing.

Then I said that we ought to move about, and I gave a shake and the see-saw moved, and then, sure enough, the black thing came and ran about under neath.

"Look!" I cried. "Look, Asbestos!"

And Asbestos leaned over and looked.

The next thing I knew, my end of the see-saw had bumped down hard enough to shake my eyes out of my head, and Asbestos was sprawling on the grass. It was awful! For a moment Asbestos didn't say anything, and then, oh, my! he began to howl! And out came cook, and out came mamma, and

Well, I've been smacked by mamma, and told that I am old enough to know better than to go hunting silly shadows, and I'm here in the coal-house alone and very hungry.

But I can't see that it was my fault that Asbestos was hurt. But I didn't cry over just a little bump. When I see Asbestos I'll tell him what I think of him. Cry-baby!

WHALES AND SEALS.

BY L. J.

JIMMY was one day fishing with his big brother, who was home from college for his vacation, and as the boat slowly he asked him to tell him something about big game.

"Something about whales and seals," corrected Jimmy.

"Whales—" was the answer. "Well, and you must know that in speaking of them you don't say 'fishing,' but 'hunting.' For a whale is not a fish, but an animal, [illegible] warm blood, and [illegible] up the surface to breathe; but it lives in the sea, and, in habit, is exactly like a fish.

"Though so large, its throat is very small indeed, and it can only swallow such things as tiny shrimps, sea snails, and minute animals, which it takes in with large mouthfuls of water. But though it has only a tiny throat, its mouth is very, very large, and it is provided with a kind of strainer; so that, after taking in a mouthful of food, it is able to let the water flow out again through the strainer.

"This is where the whalebone comes from, and a great deal is usually taken from one whale. It does not need to [illegible] to breathe, for its windpipe [illegible] as it is called, is placed on the top. It is warm air, the blood [illegible] so that the water [illegible] [illegible] of the head.

"[illegible] to breathe before it [illegible] the Esquimaux [illegible] and [illegible] the air coming from [illegible] and [illegible] together [illegible] and [illegible] water [illegible] the top of the head.

"After the whale is once hunted to its death by stabbing it with iron harpoons it is towed up to the ship owned by the hunters.

"A great deal has now to be done. The skin is a thick layer of fat called blubber. It is full of oil, and very warm, and keeps up the heat of the whale's body; it also helps him to swim, as oil is lighter than water.

"The reason it is hunted is because the blubber, oil, and whalebone are very valuable, and though it is a very dangerous operation, it is worth trying, for a single whale is generally worth from three to four thousand dollars.

"Forty-four animals were caught in one year by one vessel, but that was a very good haul, and occasionally the boat has to go home without a single whale.

"When the huge whale is near enough, the men get on it. They wear boots with iron spikes to prevent themselves from slipping off it, and with large knives they strip off the blubber. Then the whalebone is taken out of its mouth and that is simply dried until they get home.

"The blubber, after being cut into smaller pieces, is heated in a pot and afterwards strained, and this is stored in casks. The carcase is then left to sink or float, as it will; in the latter case, it is soon eaten up by birds, fish, and bears, so nothing is left of the huge whale.

"The only cruel method taking a valuable one is by spearing a very young animal. This is of no value really, but the mother soon comes to protect her [illegible] and so she gets killed as well."

"That is dreadfully cruel! In fact, the whole thing is frightful, I think," said Jimmy. "But please to tell me something about seals."

"The seals are of the greatest use to the people who live in the cold regions. Perhaps they are almost without either food or light, but when a seal is captured they have both. Seals live chiefly in the water, but spend a good deal of time on the shore, where their little ones are born.

"The head is something like a dog's, and there are four feet, two in front with a covering of skin, and two at the back, also covered with skin, but joined together and to the tail, so they really form one strong fin. In the water the seal looks graceful enough, but on land his awkwardness is often his ruin, for man takes advantage—"

"Oh, I hope men are not so cruel to the poor seal," interrupted Jimmy.

"It is much too valuable not to be killed, and up in Greenland a man wrapped up warmly in furs will sit for hours watching for a seal to come up to breathe. It manages to get the air by boring a small hole in the ice. The hunter hears it at work, and very quietly creeps to the place; then, when only a thin layer of ice remains, he quickly strikes his spear through it and into the body of the poor seal below.

"Men often go in boats, too, and sometimes a flute is played; then the seals, coming up to listen, are caught. Unless in a part where they have not been captured, this stratagem does not succeed. It is said that when the church bells ring at Hoy, in the Orkney Islands, seals often come to listen."

"They seem to be musical then," said Lance.

"Well, we will not go so far as to say they are really musical, but they are known to possess the five senses of taste, smell, touch, hearing, and sight."

"Really!" ejaculated Jimmy. "But what about seagulls?"

"I am not forgetting that, but we will first touch about the seals in the north. The Greenlanders's chief occupation is catching them, and as soon as one is procured, there is great feasting and rejoicing, the body providing them with plenty of food, and the oil with light.

"The children, too, are quite happy with strips of raw seal, which they suck as if it were some delicious sweet. How would you like it, I wonder?"

"Not at all," answered Jimmy.

"The seals valued for their skin come from the southern seas and from the neighborhood of Alaska. This is found underneath some long gray hair, which has to be pulled out first, and then the [illegible] is seen. The hunters have now killed so many seals that they are becoming very rare, and consequently the fur is very expensive.

"It was a fine day for sailing at Jimmy's heels and he got so interested that he forgot seeing any more specimens, save one that was cut up for leather, during [illegible] the voyage, until some other day.

The World's Events.

The average life of a ship is about twenty years.

Some specimens of medieval helmets weigh at least eleven pounds.

In Europe at this time some twenty-seven million men are ready to take the field in a fortnight.

The population of London is greater than that of the entire kingdoms of Greece and Denmark combined.

In making champagne the grapes are squeezed six times, each pressure making wine of a different quality.

In Corfu sheets of paper pass for money: one sheet buys one quart of rice, or twenty sheets a piece of hemp cloth.

A man can hire a house in Japan, keep two servants, and live on the fat of the land, all for a little over $20 a month.

About 30,000 families make their living in Paris in connection with the cab industry and taking care of the horses.

The largest bronze statue in existence is in St. Petersburg. It represents Peter the Great, and weighs one thousand tons.

The flying foxes of Australia are multiplying so rapidly that it is feared they will soon become as great a pest as the rabbits.

According to the deductions of a well-known astronomer, we receive as much light from the sun as could be emitted by eight full moons.

The Japanese day is divided into twelve periods, named respectively after the Rat, Ox, Tiger, Hare, Dragon, Horse, Snake, Ram, Ape, Cock, Hog and Fox.

Australia's compass plant is a double lark-spur, on which two colors of flowers grow—red on the north and blue on the south. As a compass it is perfectly reliable.

Over 100,000 pounds of snails are daily eaten by the Parisian lovers of such dainties. The taste of a properly-cooked snail is said to resemble that of a mushroom.

The famous rivers of ancient Greece, which are mentioned so often by the poets and historians of the peninsula, were mere creeks, some of them scarcely larger than brooks, and not deserving the name of river.

Many Parisian publishers blame the bicycle for the falling off in the sales of their books. They assert that people ride as long as it is day-light, and at night are too tired to read.

A rattlesnake will not cross a hair rope. Experienced campers, when they fear the rattlesnakes are around, encircle their camp with a hair lariat or two, and feel secure.

A Chinese carpenter when he is planing a piece of wood always holds it with his feet. He also turns a grindstone and does many other kinds of work in the same manner.

If an express train moving at the rate of forty-five miles an hour were to stop suddenly, it would give the passengers a shock equal to that of falling from a height of fifty-four feet.

Burglar-proof glass has been invented by a Dresden manufacturer. It is made by pouring molten glass over a network of steel wire. It is especially adapted for skylights and jewelers' windows.

A new kind of cloth is being made in Lyons from the down of hens, ducks and geese. Ten grains of feathers make rather more than a square yard of light and very warm water-proof cloth.

In the United States 9,000,000 farm hands raise half as much grain as [illegible] in Europe. Thus the use of proper [illegible] makes a farm laborer in the United States worth more than three in Europe.

The test of excellence applied to Japanese swords years ago was very rigid. It was to suspend the blade horizontally, edge upward, under a tree, and a good sword was expected to cut in twain any leaf that fell upon it.

The number of islands, large and small, in all the oceans of the world amounts to some hundred thousand. The smallest inhabited island is that on which the [illegible] stone lighthouse stands. At low water it is [illegible] forty feet in diameter.

The belief that lightning will not strike a feather bed was recently shown to be mistaken. A flash of lightning [illegible] and went down the chimney of a house, ripped the plaster and paper from [illegible] room, and then tore up a feather bed.

It has been asserted that fair-haired persons have shorter sight than dark ones. The reason for this belief being based on a number of specimens seen in certain [illegible] localities. But, on the other hand, it is contended that it is just as likely that [illegible] the opposite, namely, that dark-haired persons have shorter sight than fair-haired ones, and against the assertion [illegible] Sweden. The best evidence of [illegible] will soon be found in Egypt and Greece, the latter having the most perfect [illegible] physical proportions of any country in the world.

A GOLDEN DAY.

BY M. R.

One golden day in harvest-tide,
When o'er the smiling valley wide
Waved yellow corn and barley high,
And swaying wheat and rustling rye,
We wandered by the river-side.
The woodlands where the cushats cried,
With brown and crimson tints were pied
As on we wandered, you and I,
One golden day.

My words were few, and you replied
In words as few, but once you sighed,
And something in your downcast eye
Gave me the heart my suit to try;
I asked your hand, nor was denied,
One golden day!

IN A TURKISH HAREM.

No one who visits Turkey can know anything of the real life of the people unless she has seen some of the harems, for it is a mistake to imagine that because they are invisible to the outer world the Turkish women have no influence. On the contrary, unable to spend their time in going about and in visiting or receiving general visitors, they have all the more leisure for intrigue and scheming, and it must be remembered that all marriages are arranged exclusively by the female relations on both sides.

Though the present sultan's own wives and slaves are said to be mere frivolous dolls, spending their energies on dress and eating sweetmeats, many of the pashas' wives are women of keen intelligence, able to manage their husbands' properties, and it is well known that the valideh sultanas, or mothers of the sultans, have often exercised immense influence in State affairs.

The young girls now in Turkey are all being educated, the sultan having established excellent schools, where the girls go till the age of twelve or so, when they "put on the yashmak" and disappear. Up to that age they may be seen sitting with their fathers in the public gardens of an afternoon, and going to and from school of a morning, attended, if of the higher classes, by the usual hideous black attendant. I says a lady writing from Constantinople, was not invited to the royal harem, but I had the opportunity of seeing several Turkish homes during our stay at Constantinople.

My first visit was to the wife of one of the great ministers. The wife of one of the foreign pashas in the Turkish service arranged the visit, and kindly accompanied me. We drove to Pera and drew up at the door of a large square white house, the entrance up high steps. All round us rose the harem walls bare and white, and so high that even from the top windows of the house nothing could be seen. In spite of the beautiful turf and brilliant flower-bed shrubs, it looked and felt like a prison. The door was opened by a slave, and we found ourselves in a long and very narrow passage, which led into a large and lofty central hall full of palms, with a fountain playing in the middle, and all round stood the slaves—the women, black and white, in bright-colored cotton dresses and turbans, the black eunuchs in frock coat and fez.

We were shown into a large handsomely furnished room, with a splendid yellow carpet, but without a book, or work, or any sign of life and occupation. The little wife soon appeared, dressed in European dress; in fact, it is only in the Royal Harem that the native costume is kept up. She was accompanied by her sister-in-law, the wife of the minister's brother. The latter spoke Turkish only, so my friend devoted herself to her, while I had a lively talk in French with the minister's wife. She was small and nice-looking, with brilliant eyes. She told me that she drove out once, at the utmost twice a year, in a shut carriage, the only time she passed outside those terrible walls.

She was fond of her garden and her pets, cats and birds, but she had no children, and, I was told, lived in constant dread that her husband would, in consequence, divorce her, for very few Turks now have two wives. Her idea of European life was founded on French novels, which she read incessantly, and she said to me: "Well, we are happier than you, for our husbands may fancy one of our slaves whom we know, but your husbands go about with French actresses whom you don't know!" Sweetmeats were brought in by slaves, and then cigarettes, but I had to confess my ignorance of smoking, and, lastly, the delicious Turkish coffee in golden cup stands.

The minister's wife is a good musician, and her sister-in-law draws and paints, taught by the minister, who is quite a good artist; but in spite of music and painting, and French novels, and lovely garden, I had a sad feeling that she was like a bird beating her wings against her gilded cage.

She had read too much to be content. All the time of our visit the doors stood open, and the slaves passed and repassed, as if keeping up a constant espionage. We were just going into the garden, a slave reporting the departure of some gardeners who had been working there, when the minister and his brother came in, having hurried back from the Palace to see us.

From the moment of their arrival the two little wives were absolutely silent, and though I tried to include his wife in my interesting talk with the minister, I failed utterly; but, as I reflected afterward, we were talking of the mosques and buildings, of the sarcophagi in the Museum, and the treasures of the Seraglio, which she had never seen, and never could see, so our conversation must have been unintelligible to her. I came away with a feeling of the deepest pity for these two women, who seemed to me restless and unsatisfied, indulged as they evidently were by their husbands and surrounded by all that wealth could give them.

During our stay at Therapia the Austrian ambassadress took me to call on the wife of Munir Pasha, Grand Master of Ceremonies. Munir's wife gave me the idea of a happy busy woman. She told us she went out in her caique constantly, of course veiled and in the ferejeh, the shapeless cloak worn by Turkish ladies, old and young, which entirely conceals the figure, and the ugliness of which is not even redeemed by the splendid materials and brilliant colors usually employed. Our hostess parted with us at the door of the room, for fear any man might be in sight through the open door of the hall.

Grains of Gold.

Rule the appetite and temper the tongue.

He that has no shame has no conscience.

Money makes fewer friends than enemies.

Kind words are good, but good deeds are better.

Learn to unlearn what you have learned amiss.

What we blow against heaven falls back in our faces.

If you let an angry man alone, he will cool of himself.

The memory ought to be a storeroom, not a lumber-room.

We must snatch the present moment, and employ it well.

Attempt with prudence, pursue with hope, and wait with patience.

Virtue is every man's friend; pure sentiments are his best companions.

Femininities.

It is said that there are more widows in France than in any other country.

Tom: "Did Maud tell you the truth when you asked her her age?" Jack: "Yes." Tom: "What did she say?" Jack: "She said it was none of my business."

In society you have three sorts of friends: your friends who love you, your friends who do not trouble themselves about you, and your friends who hate you.

Authorities say the oldest medicinal recipe is a hair tonic for an Egyptian queen, which is dated 400 B. C. and directs that dogs' paws and asses' hoofs should be boiled with dates in oil.

A new field of work for American women has been invaded by Miss Jennie Revert, of Long Island, who will this year be graduated from the Veterinary School in Alfort, France.

They who, when about to marry, seek their happiness in the mere gaining of fortune and personal beauty, evince a heartless disposition, and their folly is often punished in their success.

The Princess Louise is engaged in sculpturing the figure of an angel with outstretched wings, which is to be placed over the altar in the Prince Henry of Battenburg Memorial Chapel at St. Mildred's.

Mrs. Alphonse Daudet once told of an old aunt who slept in the room next to her room, and who every evening recounted all the doings of the day to the portrait of her husband, dead years before.

Mrs. C. Reyes, eighty-three years old and crippled, cultivates a garden by her own labor at St. Augustine, Fla., and one day she picked from it a thirty-six pound watermelon and eighty pumpkins.

Mamma: "I don't see why you call Daisy Martin seifish. I think she is a very nice little girl." Ethel: "Oh, mamma, but she is selfish! She's always at the head of the class, and she won't let any of the rest of us get ahead of her."

A certain jeweler has made a tiny boat of a single pearl. The sail is of beaten gold, studded with diamonds, and the binnacle light is a ruby. An emerald serves as its rudder, and its stand is a slab of ivory. It is said to have cost $5,000.

Peeresses of Great Britain, Scotland, or Ireland, by birth, marriage, or creation, are free from arrest or imprisonment on civil process; and, in the event of a peeress being charged with a criminal offence, she would be tried by the House of Lords.

The crimping of the hair is a very old invention. Even the ancient Romans used crimping-irons. Towards the end of the twelfth century, our ancestors curled their hair in this way, and then bound it with fillets, and went out without hats in order to show it off.

The Imperial opera management at Vienna, in the hope of stopping jealousies among the "stars," has just issued a new regulation, permitting no more than three recalls after the close of acts, except in the case of first nights and during special engagements of foreign artists.

Mr. Murray Hill, who has been reading a marriage notice in a morning paper: "There is one thing I can't quite understand." Mrs. Murray Hill: "What is that?" Mr. M. H.: "According to the newspapers every bride is beautiful. Now where do all the plain married women come from?"

An excellent emollient for a rough harsh skin is made of half an ounce of tincture of myrrh, two ounces of honey, one ounce of white wax, one and a half ounce of rosewater, and one and a half ounce of almond oil. Mix the wax, rosewater, oil, and honey in a bath, and stir till melted; add the myrrh, and let it cool.

Women who wish to gain flesh should keep warm. One physician puts his whole prescription to such patients in one sentence, "Eat root vegetables and keep warm." Soft, warm, wadded lounging robes, deep, downy chairs and pillows to nestle in should be a part of the belongings of the woman seeking avoirdupois.

Ladies in Paris not only have their carriages for shopping, for traveling, and for their rides in the parks, but fashion now demands that they must have their own railway cars. The Baroness de Rothschild travels in her boudoir on wheels. Countess Petoska has purchased the carriage originally bought from the estate of the Duc de Morny. The pleasure is costly, but it enables the ladies to enjoy all the comforts of the home while they are flying through the world.

The first man-dressmaker was named Ithonberg. He was the son of a Bavarian peasant, and starting a dressmaking establishment in Paris in 1730 soon became famous amongst the fashionable dames of the day for his skill in concealing and remedying the defects of the figure. He used to drive a fine carriage, on the door-panels of which were painted a pair of corsets and a pair of open scissors as his coat-of-arms. When Ithonberg died, like his great successor, Worth, he left a large fortune to his heirs.

Masculinities.

Life is as much or as little as each man cares to make of it.

Although Fortune knocks at every man's door once, she doesn't always give a loud tap.

Napoleon's handwriting was so illegible that his letters from Germany to Josephine were at first taken for rough maps of the seat of war.

The man who asserts he will welcome death as a release from a life made up of sorrow generally sends for four doctors when he has a headache.

She: "Now that we are engaged, dear, I shall expect you to kiss mother when you see her." "Do you think that is fair?" "What is?" "To test my love so soon?"

"And you broke off the engagement?" said one young man. "Yes—not brutally, you know. But I managed it." "How?" "I told her what my salary is."

She: "Do you believe in long engagements?" He: "Well, I think an engagement should be long enough to test a man's constancy and to give the girl time to learn to cook."

A pneumatic saddle, which may be filled with either air or water, has been invented by a Parisian. For riding long distances, either on horseback or on a bicycle, it is a desideratum.

Young man, whispering to jeweler: "That engagement ring I bought of you yesterday." Jeweler: "What's the matter with it; didn't it fit?" Young man, cautiously: "Sh! It didn't have a chance. Gimme collar-studs for it."

Hawking is a favorite pastime in Persia, and every man of standing has his falcons and his falconers. No man, in fact, who loves the pleasures of the chase in that country is regarded as a good sportsman if he does not keep his partridge hawks and at least a pair of fleet greyhounds.

Cruden, the maker of the famous Concordance to the Bible that bears his name, spent nineteen years in this gigantic undertaking, and so great was the strain that upon its publication he was removed to a lunatic asylum suffering from a mental disease from which he never entirely recovered.

A statistician has actually propounded the theory that music has a wonderful influence on the growth of the hair. Baldness, according to this discovery, is prevalent in twelve per cent. of composers, which is about the average for people in general. Instrumental performers, however, always retain their hair up to an advanced period of life.

Teacher: "Have you finished your composition on what little boys should not do in school?" "Yes'm." "Read it." "Little boys when at school should not make faces at the teacher and should not study too hard, 'cause it makes them near-sighted, and should not sit too long in one position 'cause it makes their backs crooked, and should not do long examples in arithmetic 'cause it uses up their pencils too fast."

Daniel Webster was once sued by his butcher, and the man did not call upon him afterwards for orders. In the course of a few days Webster met him, and asked him why he did not call. "Because," said the man, "I supposed that you would be offended and wouldn't deal with me any more." To which Webster replied, "Oh, sue me as many times as you like, but for goodness' sake don't starve me to death!"

When Mark Twain lived in Buffalo, he happened one morning to look across the way. There he saw something which caused him to cross the street quickly and deliver this speech to a group of people on the verandah—"My name is Clemens; my wife and I have been intending to call on you and make your acquaintance. We owe you an apology for not doing it before now. I beg your pardon for intruding on you in this informal manner and at this time of day, but your house is afire!"

The father of Francesco Sforza, the head of an eminent Italian family, when at work in the fields, was accosted by some soldiers, and asked if he would enlist. "Let me throw that mattock on that oak," he replied, "and if it remains there, I will." It remained there; and the peasant, regarding it as a sign, enlisted. He became soldier, general, prince; and his grandson in the palace at Milan said to Paulus Jovius, "Behold these grounds and grandeur. I owe everything to the branch of an oak, the branch that held my grandfather's mattock."

A young man who considers himself a man of resources was once in the act of pressing a young lady to his manly bosom, when the young lady's sister entered the room. Of course he desisted at once, but he was not embarrassed. The young lady's sister said, "Excuse me," and started to leave the room, when he felt that he ought to say something, and say it right away. "Don't go," he said, "as we just been measuring to see which is the taller." She paused in the doorway, and looked at them both intently. "You're both about the same height," she said, quietly, "but sister is much the redder." Then she went out.

Latest Fashion Phases.

Women have become a little tired of the Louis Quinze coat so strenuously pushed by modelers last season, and yet no other fashion makes better use of a short length of expensive goods. It does not take very much to make use of one of these coats, and somehow a bit of beautiful brocade so used gives an air of elegance to an entire costume, though skirt and front of coat may be of comparatively inexpensive stuff. So, if any feel doubtful about being able this winter to get the "new best dress," why not accomplish it by turning last year's opera cloak, or the velvet of a disused matinee, or even the uninjured breadths of a worn satin skirt, into a Louis Quinze coat? Wear this with a skirt from more inexpensive wool materials and with a front made pretty by lace or ribbon.

An inspection of the more elaborate model gowns shows many beautiful effects produced by foreign makers in their use of odds and ends. Keep in mind the harmony of general effect, while letting details be distinctive, and your gown will have the touch of the foreign model and should produce quite as satisfactory an effect as if the coat were not made out of the old opera cloak.

The Louis Quinze coat is equally applicable to the dressy costume and the simpler one. If you must purchase now a gown for wear well into winter, no design will be more wisely chosen than the Louis Quinze coat of heavy silk, the rest of the costume to be carried out in cloth.

A notably pretty negligee was made of accordion pleated rose pink surah, mounted on a deep square yoke of white satin and lace insertion that had a lace collar and wired frill. Over the shoulders were bretelles of white satin ribbon ending in rosettes, and the lace bertha that edged the yoke formed a jabot on the right side, while two bands of insertion ran from yoke to hem on the skirt. The sleeves were accordeon pleated, and were finished with lace ruffles and epaulettes.

An exceptionally suitable wedding gown for a slender bride was made princess of ivory satin, the lines of the figure being emphasized by wreaths and scrolls of appliqued lace. The bodice was cut low, the curve at the cut-out being carefully designed to suggest the best possibilities of the figure. Straps of the satin passed low over the shoulder.

The neck was filled in with the finest silk lawn, laid in tiny tucks, the tucks running straight up to the curved-over top of the high collar, giving an effect of great grace and length of neck.

Sleeves of closely-drawn lawn, all a fluff of frills as they escaped from under the satin straps, hardly showed the gleam of the under sleeves of satin. About the foot of the skirt was a full ruche of lawn caught here and there by orange blossoms.

A spray of orange blossoms was set on one shoulder and passed down over the hip, and, of course, the veil was caught with blossoms. One charm about this wedding gown is that it will serve perfectly as a ball dress later, while for its purpose it avoided all the usual stiff unbecomingness of the wedding rig.

One new material seems to promise a safe popularity, and yet is stamped with the necessary charms of novelty. It comes as yet only in dress pattern lengths, and is found at the most exclusive stores. It is of broadcloth finish and flexible as cashmere. It comes in solid colors only, dull greens, all the darker bronze browns, dull reds and very soft purple; along the length of the goods four or five stripes of satin give the effect of rows of satin ribbon, the color of the satin matching that of the wool. This material will probably be sold by the yard later in the season. It comes very wide and is likely to be expensive enough to keep it exclusive, while its perfect taste and quality make it a wise purchase.

As to the method of making, it won't do for most women to cut such costly stuff until the winter styles have announced themselves positively. In the meantime it is a lucky—or perhaps a wise—woman whose spring tailor-made dress was bought fairly late in the season, and in material and color was chosen with a view to its usefulness this fall. That same tailor-made dress has been used very little, if any, this summer, and is now fresh and suitable for wear until October shall be well gone.

French flowermakers are somewhat paradoxically busy on the manufacture fruit for autumn hat-trimming at the moment. Red, ripe-looking clusters of rowan berries, currants, red, white and black; raspberries, even little apples and pears, quaintly mounted on stalk and foliage, are among the new things which we shall later on take to our hats and hearts.

Nuts, berries, and fruits of all sorts will oust the lace and ribbon with which we have dallied so long. Recently shown was the smartest little hat of russet-brown straw and velvet, sporting some tantalisingly realistic green figs, admirably holding the mirror to toothsome nature.

A smart fall hat is composed entirely of red currents, with a blackbird nestling in the midst of them.

A good many scarlet dresses are worn, and they unquestionably have a certain attractiveness, though rather conspicuous. Most women will prefer to make it blue or bronze brown in case the wardrobe is a small one. You can line the skirt of either color with scarlet, and a flash of scarlet from the underside is likely to make its impression even more unerringly than the whole dress of the brilliant color might.

For a hat with such a dress, nothing is prettier than the so long popular Tam o' Shanter knit of bright wool. These caps must not be made too clumsy, else they are not becoming.

A novel fall hat is in white felt, the wide brim stitched at regular intervals with red silk. Two spreading bows of accordeon pleated white ribbon, dotted with red, four large white plumes and a bunch of red cherries trimmed it in front, a red ribbon bow coming in back.

And so we are to give up dotted veils and take to fine nets without dots. But will women do this just because the "new veils" are reported dotless? Dots ruin the eyes, spoil the complexion, are expensive and don't wear well.

But if a veil is to be worn, here are some necessary pointers: With a sailor hat the veil should be shirred about the upper edge and tied at the foot of the hat band right around the hat. The other edge should hang free and the veil should be single width. With a small hat, gauze should be worn, and it should bag loosely over the face, being drawn in under the chin. With a big brim hat the veil may either hang free at the lower edge, it may be drawn close under the chin, a little shirred at the upper edge assisting the fall of the folds, or it may be shirred all around top and bottom and mask the face in a series of soft rolls.

Among the latest Paris fashions was a visiting-dress of cashmere of a middle shade of nut-brown; the skirt is sunray-pleated, the bodice opens with double revers of mordore silk, edged with narrow yellowish guipure, and a belt of the same fastens in front with a paste buckle. The chemisette is of a pinkish white chiffon.

Next, one of silver gray veloute cashmere for the skirt and sleeves, with blouse of pale buff lawn, embroidered with gold colors, and revers of silver-gray peau-de-soie. Draped belt of Chinese pink moire silk, with buckle of gold and enamel.

Also an evening dress of pale blueish-green louisine shot with white; a drapery of black lace forms a bolero over the bodice, and is fastened at the side with a horseshoe brooch of dead gold or pearls; sleeves of white tulle veiled over with black lace.

Another of white and black striped faille, with square tabs by way of epaulettes, and bodice curiously cut out in zig zags, edged, as well as the tabs, with black velvet, and showing a chemisette of white China crape and lace; draped belt of white China crape. If not for half-mourning this toilet should be brightened up by jewels or a cluster of flowers.

For a young girl, a very pretty dress is of a very pale shade of blue veiling, sunray-pleated for the skirt, with bodice formed of series of very narrow pleats of blue and white glace silk, cut three-quarters low, and confined round the waist with a corselet of white satin.

Another consists of a skirt of Nile green glace silk, with bodice of chiffon of the same color, trimmed with a deep berthe of point lace, and sleeves of white tulle.

Or, again, a dress of banana chiffon, with tulle sleeves and draperies, embroidered with beads and paillettes; the belt, of chiffon, twisted with strings of pearls.

Odds and Ends

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

To prevent the smoking of a lamp, soak the wick well in good strong vinegar, and thoroughly dry before using it.

To remove hard stains from enamelled saucepans, etc., rub the stains well with rough, dry salt, applied with a piece of damp flannel; then rinse the saucepan in warm water.

To prevent cakes or pies from burning, put on the upper shelf of the oven a tin with cold water in it.

When using stale bread for puddings, always soak it in a cold liquid. Bread that has been soaked in cold milk or water is light and crumbly, whereas that soaked in hot liquids is heavy.

Cement for Glass or China.—Soak one ounce of the best glue in a gill of white vinegar, heat it till nearly boiling in a jar placed in boiling water, and kept over the fire; add fine flour until the mixture is thick; use when it is cool enough.

Tea Cakes.—Melt in milk two ounces of butter; mix with it a pound of flour; add one egg and a spoonful of yeast; make up the dough in small round cakes; flatten them a little; bake them on a buttered tin. These cakes are intended to be buttered and eaten hot.

German Puffs.—A quarter of a pound of almonds beat well in a mortar with a little wine or cream, six eggs, three whites, three spoonfuls and a half of flour, half a pint of cream, quarter of a pound of butter; sweeten to your taste; butter your cups, and bake them half an hour; this quantity makes twelve puffs in middle sized tea cups.

Beefsteak and Oyster Pie.—Beat the steak gently with a rolling pin, and season it with pepper and salt. Have ready a deep dish, lined with not too rich a pastry. Put in the meat, with layers of oysters; then the oyster liquor, with a little mace and a teaspoonful of catsup, cover with the top crust, and bake. Veal may be used instead of beef, if perferred.

Before dipping a new pen into ink, thrust it into a fresh-cut potato, and the ink will never clog. When the pen is thickly gummed with dried ink, a few thrusts will clean it perfectly. When not in use some accountants leave their pens sticking into a potato kept on the desk for the purpose.

Gum Starch.—Two ounces fine white gum arabic powder, dissolved in one pint of boiling water, cover and let it remain for twelve hours, then pour the liquid carefully from the dregs, put it into a clean bottle, cork tightly. One tablespoonful stirred into a pint of starch which has been made with boiling water, will give shirt fronts, collars, cuffs, etc., a beautiful gloss.

Chicken Mash.—This is a nice way to serve for breakfast any chicken or turkey left over from dinner. Mince the meat, but not too fine, and to one cupful of it add two tablespoonfuls of butter, half a cup of sweet milk, enough minced onions to flavor, with salt and pepper to taste. Stew until well heated through, and serve on toast.

Cheese Pudding.—One teacup grated bread, quarter of a pound of cheese, one or two eggs, one small breakfast cup milk, half teaspoon salt, half teaspoon mustard, a little pepper, quarter teaspoon carbenate of potash. Boil the milk, bread, and cheese together; add the flavorings off the fire, then the egg beaten up, and last the potash; put into a pudding dish and bake till ready; one teaspoonful of carbonate of potash to each pound of cheese makes it digestible.

A good way of cleaning oil cloth is to sponge it well with skim milk, as it brightens and preserves the color. To wash it with a quantity of water and leave it wet is ruinous to the oil cloth.

Walnut stains on the fingers can be removed by rubbing with a little sherry or lemon-juice. Putting water in finger-bowls with the skin and inner uneatable parts of the nut, and dipping the fingers in, will remove the stains from them.

To Clean Gilt Frames.—When the frames of pictures or looking-glasses, or the gilt mouldings of rooms, have got specks of dirt on them from flies or other causes, they can be cleaned with white of egg gently rubbed on with a camel hair brush.

When the taste of the cook has become vitiated by the tasting of many dishes, a swallow of milk will restore the delicacy of the palate, so says an old authority on the cuisine.

French Pudding.—One quart of milk, ten tablespoonfuls of flour, eight eggs. Beat the eggs very light, add them to the milk, with the flour. Butter a pan, flour in the mixture, and bake it. Serve it hot with sweet sauce.

Baked Custard.—Beat four eggs very light, or until they do not string, and stir them into a quart of rich, sweet milk; add sugar to taste and a teaspoonful of extract of vanilla, or whatever flavor is preferred. Either bake in cups or a pudding dish set in a pan of water in a moderate oven. Be careful to move before the custard becomes watery. Try it by thrusting a spoon in one of the cups; if not firm, bake a little longer.

Codfish.—Butter a dish, lay in a cod of medium size, pour in a pint of water, salt it well; add pepper; dredge the fish well with flour, and put over this fine breadcrumbs and bits of butter; bake in a good oven about one hour, or until well done; then take the fish up carefully, strain the gravy, add milk enough to make the quantity a pint and a half; thicken with flour and butter, and add a few oysters; boil carefully, and pour round the cod, and garnish with lemon and parsley.

Lemon Pudding.—Set a pint of water in a dish on the stove; grate off the yellow rind of two lemons and add when it boils. Mix a tablespoonful of cornstarch smooth in a little water and stir in; add a cup of sugar, and when it boils clear take it off, and add the juice of the lemons and the beaten yolks of two eggs. Beat all well together. Line a deep dish with a light paste; set in the oven and bake; then pour in the mixture and set back in the oven for a few minutes until it is just cooked through. Beat the whites of the eggs to a stiff froth with two tablespoonfuls of sugar, spread over the top, brown very slightly. Serve cold.

To Clean Amber Beads.—Rinse them well in cold water, put them on a cloth to drain, and when half dry rub them with wash-leather to brighten them; leather instead of cloth because the amber, possessing highly electrical properties, would when rubbed attract all the loose fibrous particles of the cloth or towel, which would stick to the beads and make them more troublesome to dry and brighten. If the polish should be entirely gone, the beads can be repolished by a jeweler.

Snow Eggs.—One and one-half breakfast cupfuls of milk, two eggs, sugar, flavoring. Put the milk into a tin stew-pan to boil, adding to it one teaspoonful of sugar and a little flavor of any kind wished. Separate the white and yolk of the eggs, put the whites on a plate and the yolks in a bowl, beat the whites with a knife to a very stiff froth just like snow, then mix with them gently a teaspoonful of fine white sugar. Take a tablespoonful and put it into the boiling milk, and poach it for one minute, turning it over once, then lift it on a drainer; repeat till all the snow is poached. Several spoonfuls can be cooked at one time. Add one teaspoonful of sugar to the yolks and mix thus:—Pour into them one and one-half teacupfuls of the boiling milk, stirring vigorously. Return the whole to the pan and stir over the fire till the eggs begin to thicken; they must on no account boil. Pour the custard out on a dish and pile the eggs on top of it. It looks pretty and is very nice. A little pink sugar may be sprinkled over it.

WITH ADVANCING YEARS.—Advancing years have one inseparable accompaniment, painful if we like to make it so, or soft and sad, as an ordinance of nature—a thing which has to be, and must be so accepted. Each season takes away with it more and more of the friends whom we have known and loved, cutting one by one the strings which attach us to our present lives, and lightening the reluctance with which we reckon our own time approaching. Any one at all that we have personally known has a friendly aspect when we hear that he is dead. Even if he has done us an ill turn, he cannot do it again. We forget the injuries we have received, because, after all, they did not seriously hurt us; we remember the injuries we have done, because they are past remedy. With the dead, whatever they were, we only desire to be at peace. M. S.

THE only bird that sings at night is the nightingale, and the only one that sings while flying is the lark.

NIGHT.

BY R. W.

Mysterious night, when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the hosts of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind?
Why do we, then, shun death with anxious strife?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?

The Broken Assegai.

BY W. T. W.

HALF dozing on the rickety couch in the bedroom of my humble South Central African home, looking sleepily down on the rough stone floor, I see the remains of a once magnificent assegai—a battered blade and broken haft. Its sole calling now is to slay bats at night and to remind me of its strange story.

It was given to me by Wolf. That old fossil, with his pink lips, his midnight face and moonlight eyes, who leaves his lair to prowl about at night. He is frightfully ugly.

But to the tale.

Six years ago we were traveling on foot in the wildest part of Kgatleu, low forests of trees and grass, the haunts of kudu, wild boar and the wolf. We had halted at midday in the shade of a large tree. My two companions lay sleeping soundly, weary of the morning's march. I was lazily watching venison hung up to dry on a bow of a tree about a hundred yards off. Wolf was eating—he always was—anything that came in his way. It was a sleepy scene.

All at once two of us were roused. Wolf started, listened, and then glided stealthily to where the meat hung.

I got up and followed cautiously—he was after a Kaffir who was making for our venison. I watched him creep, and saw it was a Mokalahadi, belonging to a tribe who, too lazy to work or too shiftless, roam at large killing game and thieving.

When the two met, and Wolf was about to seize him, the man struck at his head with a huge assegai. He missed him, and the javelin merely went into the wooly tangle. With a second blow, for the fellow was strong and active, he was about to do for my poor old follower when I came up, seized a stone and cast it straight at his head.

The man caught it deftly on the point of the assegai, but such was the force of the throw that the haft broke clean off, and the blade flew several yards away, leaving him at our mercy.

Wolf then coolly proceeded to tie his thumbs behind his back, and to tether him. Next he lighted a fire—the man looking on apprehensively. Taking from his neck a nose-scraper—an iron spade of about six inches long which nearly every Mokhatla wears for ornament—he put it in the coals to heat it.

What a party we were. On the one side the two fellows sleeping quietly on, and on the other we three: I waiting to see what would happen next, the Mokalahadi growing sick with fear and hatred, Wolf watching the changes in his victim's face, enjoying the triumph, every now and again feeling tenderly all over the half-scalped part of his head.

When he deemed the nose scraper sufficiently heated, he stepped up to the prisoner and branded him in several places, the marks being in the form of an S, to signify that he had conquered.

Then he brought him down on his knees, put his forehead on the ground and requested me to put my foot on the man's head. As I did not comply, he did it, murmuring low that I should be sorry for it afterwards, and then, having deprived his victim of all he had—charms, chains and bangles—he let him go.

We returned to our former occupation, without saying a word of what had happened. Wolf picked up and presented me with the broken assegai.

I had forgotten about the assegai, and the occurrence speedily faded from my memory, especially as I was just then in for some stirring adventures. Once only did I speak to Wolf of the affair.

"That fellow will do you harm," I said.

"No," replied he, "I do not fear him. The law of the tribes says I am his king; he may do me no mischief. But, Morena, you should have put your foot on his head. He has still the power to kill you; you must take great care: I am safe."

I made light of his apprehensions, for I could not then see why he should bear me any special grudge.

Two years passed and nothing occurred, till on a night early in November we met again. It was very warm and stifling. I had thrown doors and windows wide open, so that the whole house was flooded with moonlight.

I had been lying reading in bed, unable to sleep for the heat, and had just extinguished the light when I became aware of the presence of somebody in the next room. By the peculiar Kaffir scent I knew who it was.

My room was darkened with a rug, so I could slip quietly out of bed without being observed. I quickly arranged my sheet so that it looked like a man asleep, crept into a corner and waited.

After nearly an hour's waiting, during which time I could hear him change his position, even hear him breathe, he gradually glided towards my bedroom and bedside.

Somehow, he knew of the old assegai lying on the floor, and, in passing, took it up. He then stooped over and hurriedly plunged it down on the bedclothes, aiming at the place where he expected my heart to be. Then he turned and saw he had been observed and that he was at my mercy.

As he sprang back to the door to escape, I tripped him up and secured him. Then I took a portmanteau strap, which I had kept at hand, and tied his arms behind his back, struck a light and dressed loosely.

I took a good look at him; he was not remarkable for strength or size; his face was as ugly as were other specimens of his tribe I had met with, yet there was that something—indefinable—which all over the world marks one who is born to rule.

As I contemplated him the thought came with a rush: "I wish I could make you my friend."

I thereupon made him rise, led him out by the way he came, up by the sandy road at the back of the house to the rocky hills. Arrived there, I tied him as well as I could to a tree and left him, glad to get back and to sleep—which I did almost immediately.

How long a time passed I know not, but I woke with a start and the impression that the man was back in the house. I slipped out of bed as before, and repeated my precautions with a little more care.

Strange to say nearly the same scene was enacted—the man's coming, stabbing, and being caught and bound. This time I was not to be trifled with, and saw to the thongs with great care. I led him forth and tied him to the same tree, left him and returned to bed and to sleep.

I was up next morning at daybreak, and went to find Wolf. He came along wondering what was up. From my scanty stores we took a large loaf of bread, sugar and tea, also the old assegai, and a bag of new charms which he had dropped in the scuffle. Without a word we proceeded to the place where my prisoner was tied.

When we came up the two recognized each other—the man ready to fall on the ground before Wolf, and my old beauty rearing himself aloft with the air of a king. On me he turned an undisguised look of deep hatred. But he was puzzled about the bread and other things we carried.

Wolf quietly proceeded to light a fire, and to heat his nose-scraper. When I saw his intention I kicked it over, telling him to desist.

"Morena," he said, "you will be sorry for it. At least, put his head under your foot."

Instead of this I cut the man free, offered him my hand—which he refused—gave him the bread, sugar and tea, and restored to him his assegai and charms. The fellow did not know what to make of it, and after gazing long irresolutely, he dropped everything, sank on one knee, tried to kiss my hand, and then fled as if for his life.

My old follower looked me all over, as much as to say, "Surely he is mad?" gathered up everything the man had left, and started for home, pleased with his take, yet murmuring, "Mistake, mistake." I wondered what would come of my experiment.

The next night something did occur, but as I had had a hard day I slept soundly, and could not think what it was. When I got out of bed there was lying on the table before me a lovely brand new knapsack, a skin bag neatly made. I hardly knew what to make of it.

After that, every sixth or seventh day some token awaited me at rising—a carved spoon, an ivory pin, a horn snuff-box, a bit of fresh venison, a tiger-cat's skin, a wooden bowl, a few arrows or carved charms. It was always new, neatly executed, of native workmanship. Regularly these things came to show that I was remembered, and that, as I guessed, by the Mokalahadi. Was it for good or evil?

When I was out travelling on foot or on horseback or by wagon I was specially looked after. There was always wood and water, often venison awaiting me, in such a way that I alone looking for it could find it.

Often at night a large bundle of grass would drop towards me, or my corner would grow cosier than those of the others. If in travelling by wagon I was in perplexity as to the right road, somehow I was made to know it by the signs with which one soon gets familiar. Old Wolf may have noticed something; but he took care not to let me see how much he knew.

At home often in the morning a large load—man's load—of wood awaited me as I left the house, or I would find my water cans filled and my few orange trees watered.

This went on for two years, till one day I was out camping in the wilds of Kgatleu. I was having high times. We had a couple of ladies with us to enjoy a quiet two weeks with the wagon. The usual marks of attention that had been specially frequent, suddenly stopped, and I saw nothing for two whole days.

As we were reclining idly in the heat of the day, lazily chatting and reading under our screen, I noticed a tiny Kaffir boy trying to attract my attention. When he saw that he had been observed, he stood up as erect as possible, holding aloft in the one hand a torque, and in the other a broken assegai, a token that "something was wrong."

I made some excuse to the party and went off. The boy, when he saw me coming, started off at a run, leaving me to follow quietly. Through brake and bush we went for nearly two miles, my little guide tripping on ahead.

At length he stopped and waited for me to come up, and there, behind a bush, he pointed to my friend the Mokalahadi.

Poor fellow! He lay dying—had been lacerated by a wild boar, as I could see by the wounds and the tusk, fully ten inches in length, which he held fast triumphantly.

I examined him all over and saw that it was hopeless. His young son had looked after him well, small though he was; had put water and food within reach, had made a very fair covering over his head.

I did what little I could for him and signing to him that I would return went to the waggon for supplies and to explain my absence to the party, saying I had found a dying man in the plain and might not return till next day.

They let me go my own way, as I had had medical training and was an old backwoodsman. Returning to the man's side, I dressed the wounds to give him as much relief as possible for his last hours.

There then we sat. I had grown to love the man and saw he loved me with his whole soul. He had probably paid for the wish to get me the tusks with his life, although I did not much care for such a piece of ivory. Beside us sat the boy, almost too young to understand.

Towards evening the end came. With great trouble he reached out and took a small carving, an exact copy in wood of the broken assegai, and on it he pointed to a rough picture—a native putting his head under a white man's foot. Then, kissing my hand, he led me to understand that it was I who had subdued him by an act of forgiving love.

Next he drew the boy to us and signified to me that I was to take him—his wife being dead. I put my hand on the boy's head—henceforth he was mine. A smile of intense satisfaction stole over his countenance, and with a look of deep love on his face, he died.

The whole night long we sat beside the fire—we two mourning for one we should miss. When dawn appeared we rose and I dug a grave. After an hour's hard labor it was completed, and I could place the corpse in its final resting place. With it we buried all his possessions—at least all he had with him—his pipe and tobacco, his bow and arrows, a large bag of charms, a bowie-knife and three assegai blades. I then closed up the grave, burnt the rude shelter and returned to the wagon with the boy.

On my return home I began to take my charge in hand. He loved me from the first, was tractable and had very winning ways. I am afraid I spoilt him. At times, however, a spirit of mischief took possession of him—or was it a desire to be free again and roam as his father had done?

Whatever it was I could then do nothing with him. On one occasion, when I was from home, he destroyed everything his father had given me, except the assegai which he spared.

He gave me clearly to understand that I was not to have anything belonging to a free nation to give to the whites. I only valued them for his father's sake; proofs of a blunt devotion which, however, could not go the length of living a life of settled bondage.

The little fellow did not stay long with me. "He went," as the Kaffirs say. I saw that he was fretting, longing for his father's liberty. I let him know he might go, if he knew where to discover his tribe. He tried, but failed.

So he gradually drooped and died. The poor little fellow had been as a bird in a cage, longing for and yet unable to use his liberty. I felt his loss keenly, as I had hoped to train him to future usefulness.

TABLE ETIQUETTE.—The eating of asparagus has undergone a revolution of late. It used to be considered correct to cut off the points with a knife and convey them to the mouth with the fork.

But the Continental habit of taking the stalks in the fingers has come into general use in this country among those who have traveled abroad, and is now generally adopted.

Salad is of course always taken on salad-plates, placed close to the dinner-plates, and must be eaten with a knife and fork. Cucumber however is taken on the dinner-plate.

Pastry should be eaten with a fork when dry; but fruit-tarts require a spoon as well, to raise the fruit and juice to the lips. With stone fruits of large size, such as plums and apricots, &c., the stone is separated from the fruit on the plate with the fork and spoon. It the case of small stones, such as cherries, the fruit must be conveyed whole to the mouth, and the stones returned to the apoon for conveyance to the side of the plate.

All sweets, such as puddings, jellies, &c., are eaten with a fork alone; but ices require an ice spoon. Cheese should be placed in small fragments on a bit of bread or biscuit by aid of the knife, and conveyed to the mouth in this fashion.

Fruits with stalks are held between the finger and thumb by these convenient handles, unless they are sent hulled to the table, when a fork and spoon are employed. Pears, apples, peaches, etc., are pealed with the dessert-knife, and cut into small mouthfuls.

Pines are eaten with a knife and fork; and melons require a fork and spoon. To eat artichokes gracefully is an accomplishment. Each leaf should be removed in the fingers and dipped into the sauce on one's plate, then placed between the lips, and, after the top portion is sucked off, returned to the plate.

PAPER-MAKING IN CHINA.—Eighteen hundred years ago the Chinese made paper from fibrous matter reduced to a pulp. Now each province makes its own peculiar variety.

The celebrated Chinese rice paper, that so resembles woollen and silk fabrics, and on which are painted quaint birds and flowers, is manufactured from compressed pith, which is cut spirally by a keen knife into thin slices six inches wide and twice as long.

Funeral papers, or paper imitations of earthly things which they desire to bestow on departed friends, are burned over their graves.

They use paper window-frames, paper sliding doors and paper visiting cards a yard long. It is related that when a distinguished representative of the government visited Pekin, several servants brought him a huge roll, which when spread out on the floor, proved to be the visiting card of the emperor.

Humorous.

ESSENTIAL.

Small profit if we make our mark,
And demonstrate our fitness,
Unless, acknowledging the deed,
The world shall be a witness.

Strange assault.—Striking an average.

Not always a belle.—The girl who wrings her hands.

Woman's love for ribbon is pardonable, since she owes her existence to a rib bone.

He: "I would kiss you if I thought no one would see me."

She: "Shall I close my eyes?"

What is that from which, when the whole is taken, some remains? The word "wholesome."

"Mother," said a little girl one day, "where does yesterday go to, and where is next week kept?"

Wheeler: "What do you think of the talk of tax on wheels?"

Scorcher: "Not half as bad as tacks on tires."

What word is there the first two letters of which signify a man, the first three a woman, the first four a great man, and the whole a great woman? "Heroine."

Bride, throwing her arms about his neck: "You are my prisoner for life, love."

Groom: "It's not imprisonment for life, love, it's capital punishment."

The maid: "There were four flies on the cake you sold us yesterday."

The confectioner, to an assistant: "Give the lady four raisins."

"And you will not marry me, Miss Hicks?"

"Never, Mr. Small. I do not love you."

"Very well, I am content. Is—er—your younger sister at home, Miss Hicks?"

Fat man: "Whose costume shall I wear to the masquerade ball?"

Cynical friend: "Don't wear any costume. Tie a string to your ankle, and go as a toy balloon."

"How old is your coat-of-arms?" asked Mrs. Dindling of Mrs. Freshrox.

"Old?" replied Mrs. Freshrox, with some feeling. "Why, we had that coat-of-arms made to order."

"Is Bronson as forgetful as ever?"

"More so. Why, that fellow has to look himself up in the directory every night before he goes home from business. Forgets his address."

Attendant: "The living skeleton is sick."

Manager: "What ails him?"

Attendant: "He's got a pain; but he's so thin the doctors don't know whether it's cramps or backache."

"Hawkins is very fond of his horse, isn't he?"

"Why, no; he hates him."

"That's queer. I saw him riding in the Park the other day, and he had his arms about the animal's neck."

Magistrate: "You've stolen no less than twenty-five umbrellas. Six months' hard labor."

Prisoner, aggrievedly: "Six months! That's too much, guv'nor. I think you ought to make a reduction for me takin' a quantity."

Widow: "Well, Mr. Brief, have you read the will?"

Brief: "Yes, but I can't make anything out of it."

Heirs: "Let's have it patented. A will that a lawyer can't make anything out of is a blessing."

"What do those letters stand for?" asked a curious wife of her husband, as she looked at his Masonic seal.

"Well, really, my love," he replied encouragingly, "I presume because they can't sit down."

She postponed further questioning.

Mabel: "What picture is that on your mantelpiece, Jack?"

Jack, with evident confusion: "Er—that's my sister. She's married, and lives in Australia."

Mabel, calmly: "Is she your sister by birth or by reception?"

First lodging-housekeeper: "How do ye come on wi' yer lodgers, Mrs. Smith? Are they ony ways liberal?"

Second lodging-house-keeper: "Liberal? Ma sartees! As ye only ken gentleman-lodger, an' a nice ye're in! What d'ye think he's been deein'?"

"As cannot guess; but some o' them is capable of ony! What did he do?"

"What did he not do? Wey, As catched him counting his pills!"

"Can you send the mounted police up to us?" inquired a voice through the patrol telephone the other day.

"What's the matter?"

"Someone tapped the till of my grocery of five dollars."

"Are you holding him?"

"No; he has been gone half an hour."

"Then what good will the wagon do?"

"Well, it will get out a crowd and look like business, won't it? I sell for cash, and my prices are lower than ever before."

SPORTS OF RUSSIA'S YOUTH.

If I were asked, writes a correspondent, to state what a Russian schoolboy does with his spare time after working hours are over, I should be much puzzled what to say.

Unfortunately young Russia has not the faintest glimmering of knowledge of the practice or even of the existence of such things as football, baseball, golf, athletic sports, or any other of the numerous pastimes which play so important a part in the life of every schoolboy in America.

Therefore there is no question, for him, of staying behind at the school premises after working hours, in order to take part in any game. He goes home; that much is certain; most of his time is loafed away—that, too, is beyond question.

He may skate a little, perhaps, in the winter, if he happens to live near a skating ground, but he will not go far for it; and in the summer, which is holiday time for him from June till September, he walks up and down the village street clothed in white calico garments, or plays cup and ball in the garden; fishes a little, perhaps, in the river or pond if there happens to be one, and lazies his time away without exertion.

Of late years lawn-tennis has been slightly attempted; but it is not really liked; too many balls are lost and the rules of the game have never yet been thoroughly grasped.

A quartette of men will occasionally rig up their net, which they raise to about the height of about and a half, and play a species of battledore and shuttlecock over it until the balls disappear; but it is scarcely tennis.

As a matter of fact a Russian generally rushes at the ball and misses it; on the rare occasions when he strikes the object, he does so with so much energy that the ball, unless stopped by the adversary's eye, or his partner's, disappears for ever. Croquet is a mild favorite, too; but it is played very languidly and unscientifically.

Of winter sports—in which, however, but a small minority of the Russian youth care to take part—there are skating, ice-yachting, snow-shoeing, and ice-hilling. The skating ought, naturally, to be very good in Russia. As a matter of fact the ice is generally dead and lacking in that elasticity and spring which is characteristic of our American ice.

It is too thick for elasticity, though the surface is beautifully kept and scientifically treated with a view to skating wherever a space is flooded or an acre or two of the Neva's broad bosom is reclaimed to make a skating ground.

Ice-yachting is confined almost entirely to foreigners, the natives not having as yet awakened to the merits of the pastime. Ice-hilling, however, at fair-time—that is, during the carnival week preceding the long fast, or Lent—is much practised by the people.

This is a kind of cross between the switchback and tobogganing, and is an exceedingly popular amusement. Ice-hilling is at once the most awe-inspiring to beginners, and the most charming of all sport to the expert that the mind of man can imagine.

Snow-shooing, again, is a fine and healthful recreation; it is the ski-running of Norway, and is beloved and much practised by the foreigners living in St. Petersburg.

It is too difficult and requires too much exertion, however, for young Russia, and that indolent individual, in consequence, rarely dons the snow shovel.

The Russians are a theatre-loving people, and the acting must be very good to please their critical taste. Many of the theatres are imperial, that is, the state pays the piper if the receipts of the theater so protected do not balance the expenditures. In paying for good artists, whether operatic or dramatic, the Russians are most lavish in expense.

Nearly every Russian is a natural musician, and cannot only sing in tune, but can take a part by ear. The man with any of the native instruments is always sure of an admiring audience, whether in town or village; and there is not a tiny hamlet in the empire but resolves itself, on holidays, into a pair of choral societies for male and female voices which either parade up and down the village street, singing, without, of course, either conductor or accompaniment, or sit in rows upon the benches outside the huts, occupied in a similar manner.

Occasionally, but very rarely, you may see a party of Russian children, or young men and women, playing, in the open air, at one of two games. The first is a variant of prisoner's base; the other is a species of ninepins, or skittles, played with a group of uprights at which short, thick clubs are thrown.

The Russian youth—those who are energetic enough to practice the game—sometimes attain considerable proficiency with these grim little weapons, and make wonderful shots at a distance of some thirty yards or so.

As for the middle-class Russian sportsman, he forms a class by himself, and is a very original person indeed. In his eyes the be-all and end-all of a true sportsman is to purchase the orthodox equipment of green-trimmed coat, Tyrolese hat, and long boots, and to pay his subscription to a shooting club.

He rarely discharges a gun; the rascally thing kicks, he finds; and the birds will fly before he can point his weapon at them as they crouch in the heather at his feet; of course he is not such a fool as to fire after they are up and away.

As a rule, however, he goes no farther afield than the card-table of the club-house. Why should he? He has bought all the clothes; what more does a man need to be a sportsman?

ROYAL WIDOWS.

Only two periods of widowhood recorded of English queens approach that of Queen Victoria in length—those of Berengaria of Navarre, wife of Richard I., and Isabella of France, consort of Edward II. Both survived their husbands about thirty-one years.

Joanna of Navarre lived twenty-four years after building for Henry IV. the splendid tomb which she shares with him at Canterbury, and Henrietta Maria of France survived by twenty years the execution of Charles I. Catharine of Braganza, wife of Charles II., spent a widowhood of the same length happily in her native land. Other Royal widowhoods vary from the nineteen years of Eleanor of Provence, consort of Henry III., to the three years of Adelicia of Louvaine, second wife of Henry I.

The shortest widowhood was that of Katherine Parr. No date remains of the ceremony which united her to Lord Seymour, of Sudeley, but a reliable historian mentions that this wise widow of Henry Tudor was contracted to the admiral thirty-four days after the King's death in January, 1547-8.

Edward VI. records the marriage as taking place in May of the same year, therefore Katherine Parr's weeds of woe had little time to grow shabby.

Henry VIII., left another widow, if Anne of Cleves can be so considered. When the Royal Reformer wanted a new wife in the person of girlish Katherine Howard, sensible, unemotional Anne kept her head on her shoulders by accepting the title of the "King's dear sister," and three thousand a year, instead of the name and place of Queen. She survived Henry ten years.

Of English widowed Queens since the Conquest, five married again. Adelicia of Louvaine became the wife of William de Albini, from which union descend the Dukes of Norfolk. Isabella of Angouleme, wife of John, took for a second husband her old lover, the Count de la Marche, though he was betrothed at the time to her young daughter, Joanna.

Isabella of Valois, second Queen of Richard II, on her return to France, became the wife of Charles, Duke of Orleans. Her youngest sister, Katherine, widow of Henry V., married Owen Tudor. The fourth marriage of Katherine Parr is referred to above.

Twelve widowed Queens died in England. Edith Godwin, widow of the Confessor, was interred at Westminster Abbey. Edith, widow of Harold, also died in England, but no record exists of her resting place.

Eleanor of Provence, widow of Henry III., died a professed nun, at Amesbury, and was buried in the convent church. Marguerite of France, second wife of Edward I., who died at Marlborough Castle, near Savernake, was buried in the church of the Grey Friars.

Isabella of France, was also buried in Grey Friars, having the heart of hapless Edward II., placed on her breast. Joanna of Navarre ended her eventful days at Havering Bower. Her death is recorded by the Chronicle of London, accompanied with a quaint remark, "Also the same year died all the lions in the Tower."

Katherine of Valois, who saw little of Owen Tudor in life, wedded or otherwise, was not permitted to have his company, or that of their children, in death. In shelter, or enforced confinement, at Bermondsey Abbey, she found "the silent and fearful conclusion of her long and grievous malady."

Owing to that doubtful Welsh connection, Katherine was under a cloud for thirteen years, but she had honor in her burial. As daughter, sister, and wife of kings, she was interred in Westminster Abbey.

At Bermondsey, also, died Elizabeth Woodville, widow of Edward IV., and mournful mother of the Princes of the Tower. She was buried at Windsor. Anne of Cleves died at Chelsea Palace, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Katherine Parr, who died in child-birth at Sudeley Castle, was buried in the chapel.

Nine widowed Queens died abroad. Adelicia of Louvaine left an adoring second husband and a young family at stately Arundel, and died in the nunnery of Affligham in Flanders. Eleanor of Aquitaine, widow of Henry II., who atoned by a wise and sorrowful widowhood for the gay sins of her prime, died, and was buried at Fontevraud Abbey, in the secret chamber of which house occurred the death of her daughter-in-law, Isabella of Angouleme, widow of cruel, crafty John.

Berengaria of Navarre, who mourned long and deeply for the Lion heart which had cared little for her after its first passionate impulse, died and was buried in her own fine abbey of Espan, near Mans. Though called Queen of England for upwards of forty years, Berengaria never went to that country, having been married and crowned at Cyprus.

Isabella of Valois, the little Queen, widowed at thirteen by the murder of Richard II. at Pontefract, died at Blois, after bearing a daughter to her second husband, the poet-duke of Orleans, who embalmed her memory in sweetest song, and who is said to have composed the first valentine.

Proud, passionate Margaret of Anjou, the desolate, despairing Daisy Queen, returned to her native land widowed, bankrupt of health, wealth, crown and beauty. She died at Dampierre, and was buried in Angers cathedral. An equally unfortunate Queen was Henrietta Maria of France. Her death took place at Columbe, in France, and she shares the tomb of her forefathers at St. Denis. Catherine of Braganza died among her own people, and had a splendid burial in the Royal monastery at Belem.

Another exiled and disappointed widow closes the list—Mary of Modena, second Queen of James II., and mother of the Pretender. She died at St. Germaine, seventeen years after her melancholy husband, and was buried in the convent church at Chailot.

HYGIENIC VALUE OF MIRTH.—Mirth has an hygienic value that can hardly be overrated while our social life remains what the slavery of vices and dogmas has made it. Joy has been called the sunshine of the heart, yet the same sun that calls forth the flowers of a plant is also needed to expand its leaves and ripen its fruits; and without the stimulus of exhilarating pastimes perfect bodily health is as impossible as moral and mental vigor.

And, as sure as a succession of uniform crops will exhaust the best soil, the daily repetition of a monotonous occupation will wear out the best man. Body and mind require an occasional change of employment, or else a liberal supply of fertilizing recreation, and this requirement is a factor whose omission often foils the arithmetic of our political economists.

To the creatures of the wilderness affliction comes generally in the form of an impending danger—famine or persistent persecution; and under such circumstances the modifications of the vital process seems to operate against its long continuance; well-wishing nature sees her purpose defeated, and the vital energy flags, the sap of life runs to seed. On the same principle, an existence of joyless drudgery seems to drain the springs of health, even at an age when they can draw upon the largest inner resources; hope, too often baffled, at last withdraws her aid; the tongue may be attuned to chanting hymns of consolation, but the heart cannot be deceived, and with its sinking pulse the strength of life ebbs away.

Nine-tenths of our city children are literally starving for lack of recreation; not the means of life but its object, civilization has defrauded them of; they feel a want which bread can only aggravate, for only hunger helps them to forget the misery of ennui. Their pallor is the sallow hue of the cellar plant; they would be healthier if they were happier. I would undertake to cure a sick child with fun and rye bread sooner than with tid-bits and tedium. MEDICUS.